HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE.

POPULAR COUNTY HISTORIES.

A

HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE.

BY
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PREFACE.

THE following pages profess to be no more than a compilation. So much has been already written about Berkshire that my chief difficulty has been to select what seemed to me the most salient periods and, I trust, most generally interesting episodes in its history.

I have endeavoured, I feel very imperfectly, to show how Berkshire grew to be the 'Royal County.' At first but an ill-defined portion of southern England, its earliest story is necessarily that of the country of which it formed a part, and I found it impossible therefore to disassociate its personal upgrowth from that of the districts that surround it. Though I have touched most briefly on its geological condition, I hold that to understand the history of any county, its physical structure must first be examined, as from the materials that compose its underlying strata its present superficial aspect is derived ; and on this, too, its successive human occupation and its eventual political development are almost if not entirely based.

I have been largely dependent, for the facts and opinions advanced, on the existing literature relating to the county,

of which a somewhat imperfect list will be found at the end of the volume; but I wish to express my special gratitude to Mr. Walter Money, F.S.A., whose exhaustive account of the 'Battles of Newbury,' and whose frequent notes published from time to time, all must value; to Dr. J. Stevens, whose careful researches into the river-valley gravels resulted in the determination of the existence of Palæolithic man in Berkshire; and especially to my friend, Professor T. Rupert-Jones, F.R.S., F.G.S., who has most kindly given me the benefit of his great experience in examining the proofs of this work.

I could well wish that the 'History of Berkshire' had fallen into abler hands than mine, for I see how very much could have been said about it if the story were more fully written, and if longer space could be given to it. None the less it has been a pleasant labour to tell the story of a county on the borders of which I have lived so many years.

KINGSCLEAR, CAMBERLEY,
    Jan. 1, 1887.

HISTORY OF BERKSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

ITS GEOLOGICAL CONDITION AND ARCHAIC HISTORY.

THE upper courses of the Thames and its tributaries drain parts of those English geological formations known as the Oolitic, Cretaceous, and Eocene deposits. The great Chalk area, which extends, or extended, north and north-east from Salisbury Plain, holds the last-mentioned group in the wide shallow undulations through which run the Kennet, Loddon, Blackwater, and Wey; while the Thames itself, with its affluent streams, the Ock, Windrush, and Isis, cuts through and drains the Cretaceous and Oolitic beds lying underneath the Chalk. This formation, therefore, separates two different sets of sands and clays. Below it are the Gault and Oxford Clays and Green-sands; and above it in the London Basin lie the clays and sands of the Woolwich, London, and Bagshot series. Fossils are found in the basement bed of the Woolwich Clay, below which the Chalk is perforated by boring molluscs, and characteristic shells may be procured from the septarian nodules in the London Clay.

But in the friable materials of the Bagshot group, organic remains are either scarce or are rarely more than casts; and, in the upper beds, only occur in the seams of irony loam that intersect the sands. The hill-tops of

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this group are capped with thick layers of Pliocene, or glacial gravels richly stained with iron, which has hardened the lower strata into a more or less tough conglomerate, locally known as 'pan.' It is this hard material which gives the character to the plateaux of Eastern Berkshire, and causes their edges to be cut out, first into steep crested hills and slopes, held up by the harder material of the 'pan,' and then into wide, shallow, sandy valleys, the lower parts of which, being clayish, hold up the waters of the streams. The above-mentioned gravels, laid down under marine or estuarine conditions, and by ice action, are devoid of organic relics, other than casts derived from the flints of the neighbouring Chalk. From the nature of the underlying materials it therefore naturally follows that the valleys of Eastern Berkshire are wet and marshy, owing to their clayey condition, as well as to the outflowing of the water that has traversed the porous material above ; and they hence afford pasture-land suitable to the growth of tap-rooted and deciduous trees, such as oaks. But the hill-land is more or less a heather-clad waste, difficult of cultivation, and chiefly favourable to the growth of pine, fir, and beech.

Towards the west all these beds gradually thin out. Thus at Kintbury chalk-pit, the bottom bed of the Woolwich series is but a foot or two thick ; and on 'Pebble Hill' there are rolled pebbles which may possibly have belonged to the basement-bed of the London Clay.

The Kennet Valley has a peculiar feature in a belt of peat, deposited as a strip varying from a quarter of a mile to one mile in width, and with a thickness of from four to eight feet. It contains remains of extinct animals, such as horns of urus, red-deer, Cervus elaphus, wolf,*

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* These existed up to the time of Edward I., when a wolf-hunter-general was appointed, and bailiffs were directed to 'aid the said Peter Corbet to destroy these pests.' The last wolf was killed in England in 1306.

badger, otter, bear, beaver, water-vole, horse, ass, roe-deer, goat, long-fronted and smaller ox, boar, and a species of wild-boar.*   Numbers of trees, including fine specimens of the oak and pine, and many fir-cones and hazel-nuts, and leaves of oak, alder, willow, birch, with mosses, reeds, and 'horse tails,' have been dug up in the peat proper underlying the marl or '*malm ;*' and along the northern edge of the peat-bog lies a long beach of calcareous peaty marl, often sixty feet wide and from two to ten feet thick, intercalated with thin beds of peat, which is locally known as the *strand*, and which was exposed at Benham Marsh, and close to the London Road at Woolhampton.

The Chalk formation first of all forms a bold hill or 'inlier' at Windsor, and is surrounded by the Woolwich and Reading Clays which accompany its obtrusion.   It then occupies, with a low range of hills, the bend of the Thames between Wargrave and Maidenhead, and re-appearing at Reading, it forms the northern or Ridgeway heights, separating the valleys of the Kennet and Thames, and rising to 893 feet at White Horse Hill.   Then passing under the Eocenes of the London Basin to form the southern boundary of the Kennet Valley, it attains at Inkpen the height of 900 feet, the highest elevation of the Chalk in Southern England.

The northern edge of the Ridgeway Chalk range is more abrupt than its southern face, inasmuch as it has been broken and denuded so as to display the rock materials that lie below it.   It forms, therefore, a steep escarpment which gradually becomes more gentle towards the Thames, as the softer materials are reached.   These lower strata in succession below the Chalk are the upper and lower Green-sands, and the Gault Clay of the Cretaceous series; and the Portland Sand, Kimmeridge Clay, Coral Rag, and Oxford Clay of the Oolites.

All these formations are rich in fossils, the broad general

* Newbury Dist. Field Club Proc.

distinction between those in the Chalk being that, while its lower beds contain chiefly whorled and spiral cephalopods, the upper have a large variety of echinoderms.

Pliocene gravels, similar in character to those capping the Bagshots, and deposited under the same estuarine conditions, also cover in the space between the Thames, Kennet, and Pangbourne; but west of this only patches of clay with flints, formed by the decay of the chalk, and occasional patches of gravel are met with on the slopes and in the hollows.

But the edges of the great river valleys show in many places gravels which differ materially from those which elsewhere cap the underlying materials. They line the upper edge of the hill-land, and lie against the older sea-gravels between Reading and Pangbourne, as well as on the lower ground by the Kennet mouth. They form successive terraces at Twyford, at Maidenhead, and at Cookham. They cover the hills between the Enborne and the Kennet, and fill the bottom of the Kennet Valley. They represent the effect of storm-water, and are more water-worn and rolled than the gravels which the sea had first laid down. They were deposited in succession, so that those of higher lever are older than the lower; and, unlike the sea-gravels, they frequently contain mammalian remains, as at Henley, Reading, and elsewhere.

From these geological conditions the physiographical conditions of modern Berkshire have been necessarily derived: for the aspect of this or any country is determined absolutely by the nature of the underlying materials. Along the Thames, therefore, the Oxford and Kimmeridge Clays have wet flat pasture-land, broken by the somewhat harder material of the Coral Rag, giving good road metal; and the hilly ground at Sunningwell marks the lower Green-sand with arable soil. The Gault Clay gives another belt of flatter and better pasture; along the upper edge of which a line of springs, caused by the drainage

from the superincumbent Chalk, indicates the means by which nature has scooped out the wide coombes and hollows which characterize the face of the Ilsley Downs. The Chalk, not so friable, more homogeneous, and broken across the line of stratification, is less easily 'degraded' than the strata it covers, and to this cause is due the steepness of the northern slopes of this range. In the Kennet Valley the converse is the case. The Eocene clays that fill its bottom give wide marshy meadows suitable for pasture. The sands that lie above them are moderately steep arable areas; and the Chalk forms a steep turf-clad undulation on which sheep graze.

Such are the broad geological conditions that have resulted from the great oscillations which finally converted this part of England into dry land. The Chalk of the Ilsley and Inkpen Downs may, while these later beds were being deposited, have formed low islands in that Eocene sea, which was gradually filling up its lower depths with clays and sands, to finally cover some of them with Chalk-derived flint gravel, and to line the edges of others with similar deposits.

How or when this ancient sea-bottom with its chalky islets was first upheaved is immaterial. But when it occurred the climatic conditions of Northern Europe were more rigorous, and the alterations probably more violent than now. Much greater cold, winters in which there were vast accumulations of ice and frozen snow, a more heavy and continuous rainfall, and possibly more violent tides, all helped to cut out and shape the land into somewhat its present form. Some of this chiselling of the old sea-bottom may have been caused by the action of sea and coast ice as the land slowly rose, but its eventual shape and its present graceful outline are due to the more gentle and prolonged action of rain and weather. There is no evidence of violent change. The tools Nature used at first may have been rude and strong; but those with which she perfected her work were delicate and gentle.

The first result of this upward movement seems to have been the production of a vast northern continent, of which the British Islands were the hill-lands. The line marking the 100 fathom level shows conclusively from its trace how the ancient rivers that drained the vast area once ran. The Berkshire streams and many an eastern river joined the Thames to feed the German Rhine, which poured its waters into a vast sea creek that skirted the lofty cliffs of Norway. The Doggerbank separated it from the rivers of northern England, and those which drained the Wash. There was communication between the present Continent and Great Britain. A wide extent of woodland lay around the British mountain chains, and is now found as submerged forests in many places along our present coasts.

The very effect of this vast mass of land, uninfluenced possibly at that time by the Gulf Stream, would be to produce a climate with greater extremes of heat and cold. Glaciers existed in many parts of Europe then where now only their moraines are left; their modern remnants are but the tiny nuclei of the magnificent ice-rivers of this time. As the land had slowly risen, strata had crumpled and broken, and the sea had probably rough-hewn the mass; but it is to these later agencies of frost and ice, to river action and rainfall, that its final shaping is to be attributed.

Thus the hill-land as it first rose gave the primary direction to the Berkshire rivers.

The Kennet, the Lamborne, the Enborne, and the Mortimer Brook mark out the Shefford and Silchester hills. The Loddon, receiving the Blackwater (formed by the union of the Black and White Waters), and the Emme and Binfield Brooks, form the hill-lands of Shinfield, East Hampstead Plain and Windsor Forest, and the Wargrave-Maidenhead chalk hills.

In the north the Ock joins the Thames at Abingdon, and parts the hilly ridge between Farringdon and Oxford from the main river. During the existence of the great

northern continent, none of the valleys that these rivers have cut out could have been so deep as they are now, and a much denser forest filled the whole area. The river valleys were wide and marshy, with the greater rainfall due to the extent of the forest-land, and were subject to extensive and violent floods.

It was during this continental period that Archaic man must have come upon the scene, and gradually found his way into the valleys of the Thames and Kennet. This first human inhabitant of Berkshire must have had a weary life. Confined to the natural roadways of the streams for the sake of food and water, and also perhaps because the densely wooded country was impassable for such as he, he must have had an incessant struggle for existence, as a poor skin-clad nomad who had to war with mammoth and rhinoceros, and contend with tiger and lion for his daily food.

The newer gravels that were now laid down by river-action along the slopes of both sides of the Thames and Kennet, against those of the old Pliocene time which still, despite denudation here and there, covered the hill-tops, may probably have continued right across the beds of the streams from one hill-range to that on the opposite bank. More water in winter may have filled the wide hollows full, though in summer they may have been nearly dry, or at least only intersected by thin thread-like streams. The height of the land then gave greater cutting-power to the rivers, and they soon scooped deeper. But as they did so they still left lines of gravel along their successive banks, where the men of Berkshire fished and lived by the water-side. When finally the land itself again sank, and Britain attained approximately its present level, the country began to assume still more its present form, and then possibly the Kennet Valley began to grow its peat.

The traces of these Berkshire Palæolithic men, or those who used 'old stone' implements, are not at present

numerous. They are found with remains of extinct mammals in these later river-gravels, which from their being more friable, less cemented, more mixed with patches of sand, and more water-worn, are very different in character from those deposited by the ancient Pliocene sea. These latter were ruder, and their fragments were angular or subangular. The river-valley gravels bearing animal remains show greater traces of the continuous rubbing, wearing, and polishing of water-action.

Man naturally followed the lines marked out by the river, both to avoid the dangers and difficulties of the dense forests and to procure water. Of food vessels there are no traces or remains anywhere. So few and scattered are his relics, so far apart are found the groups of his rude implements, that it seems to point to the conclusion that he was weak in numbers both in family and in population. In so hard a life only the fittest survived, and possibly his mistrust of living things extended to his brother men, as well as to the fierce beasts of the chase. His habits may well have been those of a family gathering rather than those of a community. The commune is only possible with mutual trust, and that implies a higher form of life. But little removed from the beast he slew for food, he was a savage though a man. One can expect little art from him. At Reading in the gravel-pit at Grovelands, in those at Pangbourne, and in those behind Wasing Place near Midgham, are rude flakes, scrapers, and ovate or pointed axes, roughly chipped, associated with teeth and bones of mammoth, rhinoceros, and bos.* They vary in length from four to eight inches, and may have been held in the bare hand or fixed in a cleft stick as a weapon little better than a stone club. They are found in local groups, not scattered broad-cast throughout long ranges of these river gravel beaches, but just now and then where there may have been a sheltered hollow or back-water, by the side of which

* Stevens Collection, Reading Museum.

the man could live. They may have been dropped by him when breaking holes in the ice in the winter for fishing ; they may have been dropped on the river-bank and washed in. They may have been left on his old occupation site, marked only by a heap of shells and bones and refuse, such as a savage would collect ; and as a winter flood, higher than usual, came bearing with it fragments of drowned animals, so it washed away with them the poor traces of the early settlement, and polished and scattered the rude tools of its former occupants.

In the lower gravels at the Kennet mouth, many rolled fragments of the bones of extinct animals have been turned up ; but the presence of worked flints is still doubtful. The ovate flint from the Wasing gravel is of undoubtedly good form and of human handiwork. Others have recently been found at Ipsden and Turner's Court on the Oxford hills, overlooking the Thames near Wallingford.

The discovery of most of these relics of Archaic man is mainly due to Dr. J. Stevens, who was the first to investigate the Reading Drifts in 1879, and who has since identified specimens from the low-level gravels at Newbury and Maidenhead, and in the high-level gravels in the Hurley cutting and at Purley Hall.

So that the evidence of the existence of Palæolithic man in the district is conclusive, though not extensive. He was the first human being, as far as is at present known, who lived under the shadow of the Berkshire hills. He came here from the south-east, either with or in pursuit of animals long since extinct. Of his ways we know nothing, and never shall know. His only relics are rude implements of flint associated with bones of extinct animals.

CHAPTER II.

PALÆOLITHIC man, as such, disappeared in due course. Whither we know not. There is nothing left to tell whether he was improved off the face of the earth, as successive waves of immigrants came up from the south and east, or whether he developed of himself a higher form of life. The links in the early chain of human history are so poor, and so imperfect, that there are not even grounds for theories. All we know is that he ceased to be, and that Neolithic man, still using weapons of flint or bone, but developing in them higher art and skill, and producing beauty of form and delicacy of workmanship in his weapons and his implements, afterwards occupied Berkshire. From his traces he was both more highly civilized and more numerous. The scattered bands or families of hunters began to unite in civilized groups. Doing so, they built what were to them permanent habitations; or at any rate they lived together in communities and occupied certain sites for lengthened periods. The more lengthy grew their tenure of these localities, at first favoured either as good centres for pasture or hunting, or as being conveniently situated for water, the more definite grew the trackways that united these poor settlements. Civilization had brought in its train the community of families; the commune had produced regularly used lines of com-

munication, which were in time to become roads. But in a district that was wild and savage they, perforce, followed the natural or easiest routes. These depended on what the condition of the country was. It required the higher civilization of the Belgæ or the Roman to make the difficulties of the ground give way to human will.

The country was sufficiently wild. The hill-land of the Chalk ranges of Ilsley on the one side, and of Inkpen on the other, was still high above the clayey valleys, which owed their origin to the softness of their materials, on which the river waters could act, and which were also the most suitable to the growth of forest-trees and vegetation. There was depth of soil, and hence fertility. There was fertility, and hence dense woodland, which was impassable in many parts, save by openings and glades, which gave the first direction to the primæval roads; so that the Thames Valley was probably full of tangled jungle, and the range of low hills from Farringdon to Radley, caused by the hardness of the Coral Rag, was forested with trees. The rich vegetable mould of the ancient thickets, which now lies on the clays and loams of the Oxford and Kimmeridge formations, is the only trace of the dense growth which once lined the Ock and its tributaries. The forest-land probably extended some short distance up the slopes of the Chalk range on the Gault and Upper Greensand, but it would become thinner and more scattered as the less favourable soil of the uplands was reached. The Ilsley Downs, bare of continuous forest, but dotted here and there in its clayey hollows with copses of ash or beech, were then generally dry and open as they are now. On the southern face the clays of the Kennet Valley held thickets, of which the peat-bed furnishes proofs. This woodland extended to the eastward, until, uniting with those of the Lodden and Kennet and Blackwater, it expanded into the great forest that occupied the area of the Bagshot sands as far away as Windsor.

As late as Leland's time, this latter forest of fir and beech, and possibly box, on the upland, and of oak and elm and birch on the nether slopes, extended some forty miles, from Windsor to Hungerford ; for he speaks of the wood which 'cummith out of Barkshire, and the great woddis of the Forest of Windlesore and the great Frithe.' It would appear from this, therefore, that as late as the thirteenth century the woodland of Windsor Forest was only separated from that of Berkshire by the valley of the Loddon ; and it is on record that the Kennet Valley was not directed to be disafforested until 1226. Farther to the southward the still greater forest of the Weald stretched, as the Andreadsweald, 120 miles from Hampshire to the Medway ; and the great thickets of Southampton Water joined the western forest that occupied a part of the present 'New Forest,' and so bent round to the northward by Dorset and Wiltshire to the valley of the Frome. Thus the approaches to the ranges that bordered the Kennet Valley were limited by this difficult land. The only clearings as time went on lay on the fringe of these forests, where the wood was less dense and less massive ; that is to say, the cultivation still lay along the heights, and only extended by slow degrees down the slopes. The dry chalk uplands alone were easily cultivable, and the comparatively thinner vegetation of the sandy ridges was scarcely worth the clearing for the sake of the poor soil on which it grew. Thus the hills to the south of Berkshire were soon occupied ; and the road through them was closed by the great fortress of the Gwent, which we now call Winchester. From the east the traffic would naturally converge on the extremity of the Northern Downs, between the points where Reading and Wallingford afterwards came into being, while the line of trade south of the Kennet would follow the Inkpen Downs.

Thus the trackways, few and far between, were at first directed to points on the streams where fords existed, or

sought to follow the driest and most easy route; conse-
quently from these trackways, and the hill fortresses that
rose to guard them, the gradual extended occupation of
the area can best be traced. It is almost impossible to
differentiate the successive waves of invasion that must
have swept over these valleys by way of the natural
channels indicated. It will be sufficient to remember that
as the races improved, so finely chipped stone was super-
seded by polished stone, and these again by bronze, for
tools, implements and weapons, as civilization increased
and spread. The newer races, being better armed, con-
quered those who occupied the land as a matter of
course. War, always a science, was the leading art then;
on it depended everything; from it alone came honour
and wealth and renown; and with higher art in arms came
higher skill in the pomp and circumstance of war. Hill-
forts of simple trace, because made by people with simple
implements, were improved, and altered and extended, as
their successive occupants thought best. It is very diffi-
cult, therefore, to define the different periods through which
the district passed. All that is known is that, first, suc-
cessive waves of invasion swept over Western Europe from
the south or east, or both. As that eastern land rose, and
became drier and less capable of holding its peoples, so
they, driven by necessity, passed westward with the sun.
The Basques, Aquitanians, and Fins possibly represent
the fringe of one of these early southern waves which
swept over Britain, too, and which may have left its traces
in Welsh or Cornish blood. It may have supplanted or
improved the Palæolithic nomad of Berks; or these same
peoples may represent the last remnants of his early race,
which an ensuing wave washed back into the wildest parts
of the country, until they were stopped by the waters of
the Western Sea.

It is probable that during these days the land was
gradually sinking, though the chalk isthmus that united

Great Britain to Gaul was, at first, still intact.* Only as time went on was the crack, or line of weakness, formed across the strata during the repeated oscillations of the land, worked into by the German Ocean on the one side, and the Western Sea on the other, until a junction was at last effected, and the 'silver streak' of the English Channel came into existence.

From the appearance of the map of Gaul in Cæsar's time, in which it is shown that early Celts occupied the whole of its western and southern area, as well as the extreme west of England and the district north of the Thames, it seems probable that the first Celtic immigration, working along the shores of the Mediterranean, then passed *northward*, expanding over the fertile valleys of France and Belgium, and so onward into Britain. The earliest of these tribes may well have crossed dry-shod by the gradually disappearing isthmus ; and those which have left their traces in the older barrows or tumuli of Wilts and Western Berkshire may represent some of these early bands of immigrants. They were, as their remains show, a long-skulled or dolichocephalic race, using implements of polished and chipped stone. But they, subject to the same laws of movement towards the west which had resulted in their supplanting the earlier Palæolithic men, were in their turn to be pressed back and overpowered by the stronger round-skulled or brachycephalic peoples, using better weapons, of possibly stone and certainly bronze, from the Belgic † tribes of Gaul. This, a race of Teutonic origin, had forced the barrier of the Rhine and overrun the Netherlands and that part of modern France north of the Seine. They had swept into Western Europe

* Flint flakes have been found in the submerged forest at Westward Ho ! North Devon, showing that men of the Neolithic time must have occupied it when it was above the reach of the sea.

† Belgæ (Latin), Bolgs (Irish), and Pelasgi (Greek), are all said to refer to people from the sea.

along its northern coasts, and had pushed their way across the open sea to the south-eastern counties of Britain, some 500 or 600 years before the Roman invasion. They held eventually most of the southern counties from Kent to Cornwall, including parts of Wilts, Berks, and Hampshire; and their northern boundary was the Wansdyke that runs east and west from near Portishead on the Severn Sea, until its traces are lost at Prosperous Farm * near Inkpen. Beyond this it was marked by, probably, the forests of the Kennet and the valley of the Thames. Later on, under the leadership of Divitiacus, they passed the river and conquered Essex and Herts; and from this side also they made inroads into Berks and Bucks. Whence Wansdyke ran from Inkpen has not been determined. The entrenchments still remaining on Aldermaston Common may be portions of it, as Silchester is believed to be the Calleva of the Belgic Atrebates; but on this ridge, so long under cultivation, even earthworks would soon disappear.†

Thus before the Christian era the border-land between the two great Celtic families of Berks was occupied on its north side by the Celts proper, and on its south by remnants of Celtic tribes and their conquerors, the Belgæ. The Celtic tribes of the Bibroci (whence comes one of the derivations of the name of Berks), a branch of the Hædui from Autun, occupied part of the great forest of the Andreadsweald, and probably the great forest-land of West Surrey and Eastern Berks; north of them the

* Colt Hoare's 'Wiltshire.'

† At Winklebury, an earthen fortress near Basingstoke, the greater part of the vallum was thrown into the ditch during a hard winter some fifty years ago, when a farmer wished to give employment to his men; and, but for a portion being left untouched, which shows a depth of more than twenty feet from the crest of the rampart to the bottom of the ditch, there would now be little or no trace of what once stood there. What happened in that case may have happened with regard to the eastern part of Wansdyke, too.

Ancalites held the Thames valley near Henley; and the more powerful family of the Segontiaci, an offshoot of the Spanish tribes at Siguenza, occupied a part of Hampshire and the greater part of Berks. The land to the south was mainly Belgic. The Belgæ proper held Southern Wiltshire and Western Hants, with the fortress of the Gwent as their chief town. The Atrebatian branch, originally from Artois or Arras, continued the line towards the east, and held the southern fringe of Central and Western Berks with *Gwahl Vawr*, so called from the great earth-wall which surrounded it, as their capital; and lastly the Rhemi or Regni held Sussex, Kent, and Surrey, and some of its subordinate families may have pushed up into parts of Hants and South-Eastern Berks. Their principal city was that which afterwards became Regnum and Chichester.

The Atrebatian boundaries, according to some writers, were marked by the Lodden on the east, the Thames and Ilsley Downs on the north, and the Lambourne and Ashbury on the west; but it is scarcely probable that they reached so far north as this until much later, if at all. One thing is clear: that as the country was held by Celts before the Belgic invasion, and that as also this last wave came not from the south but from the south-east, the result must have been that the Celts of Berkshire would have been driven up into its northern and western parts. That is to say, that when the wave spent itself against the great forest of the Kennet Valley, beyond which the exiled Celts took refuge, the Segontiaci, who may have once held the hill-land between the Loddon and Kennet, may have retreated to the Ilsley Downs, and abandoned their ancient capital to the invaders.

Probably the Belgic boundary throughout, Wansdyke alone excepted, was very ill-defined. There was too little difference between the tribes for there to be any lasting race-feud. They, the latest and most enterprising, and probably an exclusively bronze-using people, were

pressed forward by the inexorable fate that goes with a frontier tribe. With energies yet unexhausted, and with fresh blood poured into it from its brethren in Gaul, it was compelled to absorb the weaker peoples with whom it came into contact. Rarely does an invading race hold its own if it sinks to the level of the conquered. It must assimilate the invaded, and not be absorbed by them.

Whether Silchester represents the original capital of the Segontians, or only that of the Atrebates, is therefore doubtful, for it lay close to both the tribes. Camden says that the Segontiaci, the principal Berkshire tribe, had a town called *Caer Segonte,* which he thinks is Silchester. Nennius, writing in the ninth century, refers to the capital town as *Caer Segeint,* but adduces no evidence as to its locality. The chief reason that has been given for assigning it to the Segontians only, and not to the Atrebates, was the discovery within the walls of Silchester of a stone bearing the inscription, ' Deo Her . . . . . Sægon . . . . T. Tammon . . . Sæn . Tammon Vitalis . . . . ob honor,' which, if the proposed reading of ' Deo Herculi Sægontiacorum Titus Tammonius Sænii Tammonii Vitalis filius ob honorem ' be correct, would after all simply mean that an altar to the Segontian Hercules had been erected in Silchester. It would not follow that the city was Segontian for all that. Titus Tammonius may well have raised a stone in memory of the deity of a neighbouring tribe, even if he did not himself belong to it ; not sure of his own faith or of his own spiritual patron, he may have hastened to honour that of his neighbours or of his ancient ancestors. The best evidence in favour of its being the capital of the northern Atrebates, at any rate when the Romans arrived, is found in their itineraries later on. But Camden also states, that in the territory of the Segontiaci was the Cunetins or Kennet, and that their capital city was Vindonum.[*] This may refer to their later

[*] ' Hist. Manchester.'

capital, the site of which is still unknown; but on the slopes
of the Ilsley Downs, in the neighbourhood of the great hill-
fortresses that line it, or even nearer the valley of the
Thames, may once have stood the collection of rude huts
that marked the new site of the exiled Celtic town. Unlike
Silchester, which had been improved by Belgic force, and then
built of stone with Roman skill, the Segontian capital, little
better probably than a Zulu kraal, passed away and left no
certain trace. Near the great hill-fort of Perborough, on
the downlands of Roden and Compton, an area of nearly
twenty acres* contains relics of burnt buildings and burnt
corn, pit-dwellings, and a cursus. As oyster-shells, and
Roman pottery and coins are present, it was occupied by
the Romano-Britons. But as there are also fragments of
older earthenware, it may have existed before Roman times;
and either there or on the open land of the downs, not far
from the springs that form the Pangbourne stream, may
have been the new capital, the new Caer Segonte of the
Segontians. Probably it was burnt during the Saxon inroads.

The remains left during this Celtic and Belgic period are
numerous and important. To which of the two to appor-
tion them with exactitude is difficult to decide ; but all the
land north of the Kennet may safely be thought to contain
Celtic traces chiefly. Not that stone relics would accu-
rately define Celts, and bronze tools Belgæ; for the
country to the south had been held by both peoples, and
through raid, commerce, and friendship, the better weapons
must have often passed over the border to the Celtic
families. All that is suggested is that the roads, the relics
on this side, and the hill-fortresses should be deemed
originally of Celtic construction, unless they can be proved
otherwise.

It must be remembered, again, that the population of the
district was very thin. Much of the low land was still too
densely wooded to be suitable to the flocks and herds of

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* Hundred of Compton.

these primitive herdsmen, and the streams themselves, though possibly not so deep at all times as they are now in their canalized state, were much more swampy, and ran through the wet marshy valleys by many streams which the winter's rain converted into swollen torrents. The roads then which joined the rude villages ran either along the high land, or joined such places on the sides of the valleys as could be approached by natural and permanent fords. These fords and the hill-fortresses are the first real clues to the direction of the ancient tracks. They are of the first importance as showing the occupation of the district. ' Of all the antiquities of a country, the roads are necessarily the oldest. We study its earthworks and burying-grounds, its castles and churches, its coins and pottery ; but while these things mark the progress of man's dominion, the roads mark its origin. Following the natural features of the country in the hills and rivers, or appropriating the cross-tracks by which the wild animals descended from the high ground to the water, it was by these means that man first laid claim to the possession of the land. Gradually the trail through the woods widened into a waggon-track, and at last developed into a road. If you wish to read aright the history of a district, of a city, or of a village, you must begin by learning the alphabet of its roads.'*

In all Berkshire the oldest and most important road is the Ridgeway that crosses the Ilsley Downs. It was the main channel of communication between east and west ; and, as part of the Icknield or Ickleton Street, or way, joined the country of the Iceni, in the eastern counties, with the capital of the Damnonii of Devon. Its very name, the ' *Icen-eld* Street,' shows its ancient origin as the old track-way of the tribes. Crossing the Thames at Goring, where its name is corrupted into the ' Hackney Way,' its main direction passes by Lowbury to the high land of the chalk.

It seems protected by the earthen fortresses of Lowbury, Letcombe, and Uffington, which all lie on its northern side. It does not follow that these are all entirely Celtic ; they may have been altered and occupied by later invaders, but they equally may have been constructed to guard the great highway.

Lowbury is weak and insignificant in trace, and, like similar works of quadrate form and on lower ground, has been called Roman, though this is doubtful.

The road farther on passes by two barrows, each about 11 feet high and 100 feet in diameter, in one of which were human bones in a bed of ashes deposited in clay, and a bronze instrument now in the Ashmolean Museum. This interment is probably of late Celtic or Belgic times. The road then passes Churn Knob, where are two more tumuli which contained bones and teeth of horse and swine, with fragments of iron and ashes. These remains would seem to be Saxon. It was evidently an ancient cemetery, as its name, 'Cairn' or 'Churn' Knob, indicates, and was used by successive races of people. The barrows were opened in 1815, and tradition relates how fifty years before an attempt to do so had been checked by hail and lightning, and strangely enough on this occasion also the work was stopped by a thunderstorm. Fairies were held to be its occupants, but not malevolent ones; for a ploughman who had broken his ploughshare and left it there, found it the next day repaired and whole.

Still farther on it passes a mound on Cuckhamsley Hill, to which reference will be made further on ; and then Letcombe Castle, anciently known as Sagbury or Sackborough, which is nearly circular, contains about twenty-six acres, and stands on the highest point of the ridge 900 feet above the sea. The rampart itself appears to have been based on, or heightened by, stones ; as Hearne, in his diary, states that within the bank 'they dig vast

stones, being a red flint, some of which a cart will hardly draw. . . . They are placed in the Banks of the Dike or Trench in form of a wall.'* He further states that similar stones came from Lamborne Downs, so that these ' red flints ' were possibly Sarsdens ; but ' none have been discovered of late years.'

On Hackpen Hill, again a name of Celtic origin, are barrows and traces of a weak earthwork, and farther on is the great earthwork of Uffington, overlooking the valley of the White Horse.

Though its name is Saxon, for it was the settlement of the Uffingas, descendant of Offa, the Anglian King of Mercia, it still may have been a place of defence in far earlier days. It is 700 feet by 500 feet, its greatest diameter being north and south, and it has a double vallum, within which still remain a double row of holes in the chalk, in which stood the small trees that crowned it with a wooden stockade. These were either completed by wattle at the top alone, or were so wattled as to ' revet,' or keep vertical, the inner part of the earthen rampart, as is done in modern fortification.

It has been called Danish ; but apparently so only because of the theory that here was fought the famous battle of Ashdown between Alfred and the Danes. In all these cases it is nearly impossible to determine the exact origin of these or similar earthworks. If square or rectangular they may be Roman, as such a form lent itself to the methodical organization of the legion or its composing fractions. If round, it has been called Saxon or Danish, as such a form would be suited to the rude grouping of men together under leaders who had no definite battle formation. If irregular and following the form of the hilltop, they are with some certainty attributed to Celtic or Belgic makers ; the extent and massiveness of the rampart being the only guide as to whether it was constructed by a

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* Newbury Dist. F. C., vol. i., p. 183.

people using inferior tools of stone, or those who, with the use of bronze, had acquired higher constructive skill.

But the surroundings of Uffington distinctly point to an early occupation of the area. Near it is the famous White Horse, 374 feet long, and with its outline marked by trenches 10 feet wide, cut 2 or 3 feet deep in the turf to the white subsoil, on the steep chalk hillside that faces the valley of the Thames. Tradition, often right, but still more frequently in want of better corroborative evidence than hearsay, has linked it with Alfred and his time. Because the Saxon standard was a white horse, and because the names of Hengist and of Horsa are probably but forms of the well-known ensign of the Saxon leaders, it has been gratuitously assumed that Alfred the Saxon caused his men to carve this ancient figure on the hill-side to commemorate his Ashdown victory over Baegsæg the Dane. It may be so, and the argument in its favour would be stronger were it the only turf-carving of a similar character. But such rude figures of animals and of men are not rare.* At Wilmington (Sussex), at Cerne (Dorset), are figures of men ; at Westbury (Wilts), figures of horses, which may be attributed to times far anterior to those of Saxon or Dane. Reference is made by Cæsar to the image of immense size ('immani magnitudine'), whose 'limbs are woven with boughs and filled with living men, to which they set fire, and the men are overcome and killed.' This has usually been understood to mean that actual wicker figures or cages were constructed to contain the victims.

An English history for children states that 'the Britons were very cruel to their enemies ; they used to make a great wicker figure of an idol, to fill it with their captives, and then to burn them all together ;' and a curious picture of such a sacrifice is given in the *Saturday Magazine* of August, 1832. The effigy is much higher than the pre-

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* There are other instances, but most of these have been modernized ('Turf Carvings,' Dr. J. Stevens).

siding Druid, and contains victims in arms, legs, and body, while a man mounted upon a ladder is assisting a female to climb into one of the thighs. The head is apparently of solid woodwork; but this effort to explain Cæsar's statement is proportionally fanciful. It could scarcely be constructed to stand, much less to burn. The figures of 'immense size' were evidently not such as the artist delineated; but sacrifices may have been made in wicker enclosures at the feet of hill figures of men cut into the turf. If this be correct, it is more than probable that the hill figures of horses were also cut by the same race. It has been pointed out more than once that the horse of the Saxon standard is correctly drawn, while that at Uffington has its wrong leg foremost; but on a coin of Cunobelin, who reigned in Britain, A.D. 40, the figure of the horse on its reverse is similar to the turf carving in the valley of the White Horse. Everything is in favour of these turf carvings being of far earlier date than Saxon or Roman. In the name of the Dragon's Hill there is a further clue to its ancient history. Not 'Dragon,' but 'Pendragon,' is said to be its true appellation; and Pendragon is Celtic for a chief of kings. Though formerly assumed to be wholly artificial, it is only partially so; for, though its sides have been cut and scarped, its interior shows the natural stratification of the chalk. 'Dragon Hill,' of course, has its late tradition. The ancient origin of the name long had passed away when newer legend attached to it the Dragon's story. 'For he was slain there, and the grass grows not where his blood streamed down.'* So the great chief's hill lost its prefix, and to the Dragon's name was appended the legend of St. George:

> ' If it be true, as I've heard say,
> King George did here the dragon slay,
> And down below on yonder hill
> They buried him, as I've heard tell.'

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* N. D. F. C., vol. i., p. 148.

There are other traditions and remains bearing on the question. Near the village of Kingston Lisle is a rough Sarsden stone about 3 feet high, and pierced with several natural holes, one of which, beginning at the top and emerging at the side, is such that practised lungs can produce through it a sound as of the bellowing of a calf, which can be heard as far as Faringdon Church, six miles away. It now lies under an elm-tree outside an inn, but once it is said to have stood upon the downs above. Though called 'King Alfred's Bugle Horn,' tradition in this case is at fault. The higher art and skill of Saxon times needed no such rude instrument to assemble its warriors to battle. They occupied the lower land in their time, cleared and cultivated at Wantage and elsewhere. But the ancient Celtic tribes lived on the open area of the downs, and here therefore would this rude trumpet of stone be of value for collecting the bands of pastoral nomads with their herds and treasures, their wives and children, within the stout rampart of Uffington.

The still more remarkable relic of primæval days, known as Wayland Smith's Cave, around which legend, superstition, and fiction have woven a quaint chain of picturesque interest, lies about a mile beyond the castle, and again goes far back into prehistoric time.

Tradition has called it at one time the burial-place of Baegsæg the Dane, slain at Ashdown ; at another it has told how here Wayland Smith made shoes for the sacred horse carved on the hill above. Later on the legend says that travellers on the Ridgeway could get their horses shod by tying them to a stone in the circle, and placing a small silver coin on the flat horizontal stone, when an invisible smith would execute the necessary repairs. It is on this that Sir Walter Scott built the charming fiction of the Berkshire farrier, ' Wayland Smith,' and his utilization of this story to get a living. But *Weland* was a Scandinavian deity, and in the Norse Sagas he is represented as

making 'arms for the heroes, as did Hephæstus for the gods and warriors in Homer.'* The popular belief, as Sir Walter Scott points out, may also have arisen from legends of the Northern Duergars, who resided on the rocks, and were cunning workers in steel and iron. Myth and fable build up strange stories and produce strange legends, whose origin it is often difficult to trace. But there is no doubt that the remains are purely sepulchral, and that it is but a cromlech with its outer circle of stones, and its avenue of approach to the stone kist that held the warrior's bones. The earth that covered it had been removed long before the Saxons came, for in a charter of Edred, A.D. 955, it is referred to as 'Welland's Smithy,' and as a well-known landmark. The legend of the mysterious smith is older than the Edda, and finds its prototype in the stories of Dædalus and Tubal Cain.

There are many theories as to the intention of these great earth castles. Mr. Phené,† who found in Letcombe a rude kist of flints containing bones, a fragment of pottery, and a conical stone, looks upon this fortress with Uffington and Blewbury as forming a religious group of three hills.

Other writers look upon the camps as running in pairs, and consider that those on the ground were formed by Romans, whence to attack the greater works on the hills. But it is open to question whether these skilled and disciplined soldiers would have thought it necessary to first construct a massive earthwork in order to capture another which was close at hand. Their better armaments and tactical skill would rather induce them to save themselves the useless labour of forming a redoubt that must be guarded, when there were strong chances in favour of the successful assault, and consequent retention of a fort already made. But whatever other purpose they served, they certainly were so placed as to guard the Ridgeway, which was behind them, and in a secondary way those

° *Blackwood.*   † N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 188.

cross-roads which led to the fordways of the Thames and Kennet on either hand.

As time went on, the lower lands became cleared; and the settlements now formed were joined by another branch of the great western roadway. Leaving the Icknield way on the high land to the east of the Thames, it crossed the river by the ford at Moulsford, and passed by Blewbury, Upton, Ardington, to Wantage, where it either followed the line afterwards taken by the Roman 'Portway,' or led through Childrey, Sparsholt, Compton, Beauchamp, and Ashbury, to the west. Possibly a branch uniting the great upper and lower roads ran from near Moulsford past Lowbury to the Ridgeway, for in the angle of such a junction lies an earthwork called 'King's Standing Hill,' though this, like many others, may be of later construction. Still its situation is striking.

Farther on it is guarded by Blewburton Hill, and though there is no known trace of a fortress at Lockinge, where there is a very suitable site, tradition speaks of a 'Limborough' camp at Wantage; and the camp at Hardwell, measuring 140 feet by 180, which also has been attributed to the Romans because of its somewhat rectangular form, dominates the same roadway from the hills over Compton.

North of this area the country must have been wet, wooded, and subject to floods up to much later days. The rare fordways here, as in the other river valleys, would naturally give the direction to the road-tracks; and these, in their turn, as time went on, originated the bridges that crossed them. Thus the high land would be chosen for the natural roadway, the fords their natural direction; and the ancient names of towns and villages would, failing the actual discovery of implements or other relics of man's existence, point out their natural course. Between the Thames and Ock there seems to have been a road uniting Oxford, Cumnor, Besilsleigh (near which is a barrow), Kingston, Buckland, and Farringdon. At nearly

the narrowest part of the area is Cherbury Camp, which
seems to guard it, and also a possible summer cross-track
from Lux-*ford* to the south. A branch from Abingdon,
also an ancient site where British relics have been found,
appears to have joined it by way of Marcham and King-
ston. Minor east and west trackways doubtless were
formed as time went on between Basildon, Yattendon, and
Grimsbury Fort, where it joined the great Northern road
from Ardington ; another united Newbury with Reading,
by way of Bucklebury Common, between the Pangbourne
and the Kennet. Similarly the route afterwards chosen by
the Romans, along the watershed of the Lamborne and
Kennet, may have been occupied by a Celtic track from
Baydon.

South of the Kennet a road from Hungerford, leaving
the *Beorgh* of Kintbury on its left, went to Greenham
Common, with its barrows, and was then joined by one from
Newbury, crossed the Enborne at Brimpton, where again
are more barrows on the high common land, and so reached
the *Gwahl Vawr* of the Atrebates. It passed over the old
river gravels of Wasing where Archaic man had lived. The
same causes that led him to follow the dry river-edge, led
to his successors choosing the same route. The valleys were
either difficult or impassable still.

For in this southern district the woodland was thick.
The river valleys were dense with vegetation ; and east of
the Loddon lay the forests of the Bibroci, which, after-
wards as Berruc Wood, probably gave its name to the
shire, and now has shrunk to the Royal Park of Windsor,
with the belts of pine forest which dot the area of the Bag-
shot Sands. Roads and cultivation in this district would
naturally be rare. Few of the names are really ancient,
and therefore they afford little guide.

From Reading the great riverside road that had passed
from Wallingford by Moulsford, Streatley, Basildon and
Pangbourne, as a summer trackway when the river had

not overflowed its banks, crossed over the ford near the junction of the Thames and Kennet, and so by Twyford to Maidenhead on the Thames. The first name of Reading may have been derived from the Celtic Rhydding, a ford; and in the materials of the river-bank, implements of stone, and shuttles and pins of bone, show that Celtic man had occupied with Neolithic tools the old fishing station of the Palæolithic hunter. On the heights, south of the river, too, is a field called ' Bob's Mount.' A map of 1813 shows that a tumulus stood there, and flint-flakes and cores prove that man once camped there. Over the Palæolithic gravels of Grove-lands, in deep hollows in the soil, were found a finely chipped celt of flint and fragments of rude pottery; and on the surface were flakes of later date. Again, the occupation site had been the same since Palæolithic days. Beyond the area of the county, though only just beyond, at Taplow, British urns and chipped and polished axes have been dug up over the ancient mammaliferous gravels; and the hill-top of the village shows traces of an ancient earthwork, and its soil is rich with flint-flakes and implements with bone tools and ancient pottery. Possibly the name for Maidenhead, which it overlooks, comes from the *Mai dun*, or great fortified hill, overlooking the river *hythe*, or landing-place. Though the origin of the parts of the word is different, they may have been combined. On the dry land overlooking the Church of Bray, again, lie flakes which point to the existence of an old ford-way where the ferry now stands; and flint tools, now at Jermyn Street, were picked up at Maidenhead, and a perforated stone hammer at Sunninghill. A triangular scraper was found in the Thames at Windsor; but there is no doubt that this, the great highway for so many centuries, contains numerous relics along its entire course. South of this road the district was inhospitable and wild, and the soil poor. The open heath was passable everywhere, and even the woods probably grew little undergrowth. Thus an old

road may have passed by Maiden Earley, Wokingham or Ockingham, to the four barrows not far from Ascot Station (whence a track may have run to Old Windsor), and thence by the three barrows south of Virginia Water Station to the Fortress of Eldebury and Latcham Ford. These Ascot barrows were 64 feet in diameter, about 3 feet high, and with trenches 12 feet wide and 2 feet deep around them. These were unquestionably British. A rude cross-track may have left this at Wokingham, and crossing Woden's Hill to the British Camp on Easthampstead Plain, have passed the village of 'Wickham Bushes,' and the barrow on Midrow Hill, and so along the Chobham Ridges by the barrow there, and to the southward.

The 'Camp' follows closely the form of the hill, and has on its steeper north-western sides a distinct 'double vallum.' It has an internal area of about 600 yards by 300 in its widest parts, and a deep excavation in it is said to represent the site of the well. Fragments of black Romano-British pottery are common there.

At Wickham Bushes are the circular depressions of pit-dwellings, in which are fragments of Samian ware, rude pottery (mortaria, incense cups, etc.), Roman tiles, and occasionally indifferent Roman and British coins. Among the latter was a coin of Cunobelin. The Midrow Hill barrow, which has evidently been opened, is about 4 feet high, and 40 feet deep across, with a very shallow trench. Besides this path, there were few others on the hill-land between the Blackwater and the Windle. The river valley had one from Wokingham marked by flint-flakes at Sandhurst Church and Sign Farm, and which crossed the fordway at Frimley to the Bury Hill. But it is equally possible that these isolated groups of flakes were merely dropped or made by the old Celtic hunter when he halted for his mid-day meal. They are always found near water. Another trackway may have led from Calleva to the 'Broadford' at Blackwater, and along the southern

boundary of Berks; for there are barrows and flint stations by the fordways and the streams. But this area at least was poorly provided with roads under any circumstances, for the land itself was poor.

In the western part of the county the great ridge between the Thames and Kennet was the dwelling-place of the greater numbers of the early Celts. Beginning at the west, there seem to be at least seven great cross-roads that intersect the county and unite the fords of the Thames and Kennet. They are winding and irregular even now; and, unlike the straight highways of the next possessors of the land, they unite ancient names and pass by a series of strong earthworks.

They run as follows, commencing at the westward.

1. Farringdon, the point of junction of the roads from Radcot Bridge and Lechlade, Uffington *Castle*, Membury *Castle*, and Hungerford (Kennet). On the Lechlade road is a strong earthen fortress of circular form, 200 yards in diameter, and with a ditch 50 to 60 feet wide; and the hill east of Farringdon seems an equally suitable site. Uffington has been already described; but between that point and Lamborne the hills are dotted with barrows at 'Idlebush,' and elsewhere; and the well-known group of the 'Seven Barrows,' which, when examined in 1850, were found to contain flints, urns, and burnt bones. One mound, measuring 10 feet in height by 360 feet round, was especially rich, being 'completely filled with British urns, some of them being 13 inches high. Another held, under a secondary interment, a primary interment covered by a cairn of flint and chalk, and with it a base 10 inches by $8\frac{1}{2}$; bones of dog, and the ancient British long-faced ox, the *Bos longifrons*, were also found among the earth.'*

Membury is an ordinary fairly regular Celtic earthwork, with a single vallum, much overgrown with trees, close to

* N. D. F. C., vol. i., p. 178.

which are foundations of old buildings that may indicate after Roman occupation.

At both Farringdon and Wantage British coins of Tincomius, the son of the Atrebatian Commius, have been collected; and at Lamborne-Woodlands a barrow was opened containing a white flint celt, which is now in the British Museum.

2. Tadpole Bridge (Thames), Stanford (*Stoneford*, Ock), Hagpen (Earthworks), and thence, along the spur, as the 'East Ditch,' by Greendown Farm, Bockhampton (*Bochentun*, Lamborne), Thorn Hill (the 'ditch-piece'), and Membury. Barrows lie all along the latter part of this route, in 'Cock-crow Bottom' to the east, and other places; and the names of '*Bury* Down,' and 'East*bury*,' point to ancient holdings that long have disappeared, but where barrows and earthworks still exist.*

3. Duxford (Thames), Cherbury *Castle*, or Lyford (Ock), and Letcombe *Castle;* whence the road divided, one branch going to Chaddleworth, to Kintbury (Kennet), and the other by Fawley to Hungerford.

Cherbury Castle, traditionally said to be the site of a palace of Cnut, which is improbable, is an oval, double-ditched earthwork, about 300 yards long; and about a mile from this, in an orchard, in the parish of Hinton Waldridge, were, fifty years ago, traces of another.

The term 'bury,' as applied to Kintbury, is indicative of an ancient origin, though it was afterwards held as *Cheneteberie* by the Saxons, who still preserved the name of the old village that may have stood on 'Pebble Hill,' the *Beorgh* by the Kennet. A barrow 95 feet in diameter, opened at Great Shefford, was found to hold ashes, bones, teeth, and pottery, the bones being chiefly those of the deer, ass, wolf, and fowl; a rude cist in the chalk contained burnt human bones. A bone tool and flint-flakes were lying near them.

* N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 63.

4. Besilsleigh, Frilford (Ock), Wantage, and Letcombe *Castle*, and Hungerford.

Between the two branches of the Ock is a tumulus on ' Barrow Hill,' and at Wantage may once have stood the earth fortress of Limborough.

5. Garford (Ock), near Cuckhamsley, Boxford (Lamborne), Kintbury (Kennet). At Ardington traces of the old village may be looked for ; at Stanmore and Row*bury* the very names carry history with them, and British urns, with zigzag markings and human bones, have been dug up ; while at Boxford there are definite traces of a Celtic earthwork, 210 feet long by 180 wide, on the spur above the ford. There, too, on the ' Borough Hill,' are also hollows and irregularities such as may be caused by the remains of pit-dwellings.

Possibly the above road divided at Cuckhamsley, sending an eastern branch, by Bussock *Camp*, to Speen and Newbury.

Bussock Camp, which may derive its name from Boscage, a wood,* is nearly square, but has a double vallum, from 12 to 20 feet high on the north side, but only 4 or 5 feet on the south. Its shape points to a possible Roman origin, or Roman improvement, and it is connected by a trackway with the neighbouring Camp of Grimsbury. On Snelsmore Common are the distinct traces of entrenchments, extending across the hill-top from valley to valley, and which may have guarded or formed the road which, starting from Boxford, crosses this and Courage Commons for Grimsbury ; and at Bagnor a canoe 8 feet long was found in the valley bottom.

Early in the present century an urn of a light-brown colour, and ' large enough to contain about a gallon,' was discovered about 8 or 10 feet from the river on Speen Moor, in a cavity 4 feet deep, and covered by an artificial mound 8 feet high. ' Round the hill where the urn lay were

* N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 14.

several semicircular ridges with trenches between them ; the extremities of the semicircles were bounded by the line of the river.'

6. Oxford (Thames), Abingdon * (Ock), Beedon, Oarebury Castle, and Newbury.

There is not in this case, as in most of the others, a work closing the road on the ridgeway itself ; but it is possible that one of weak trace may have existed, though there are no signs of it now apparent. It passes near to Churn Knob and Cross Barrow, and then two tumuli, the first of which was opened in 1815. Oarebury Castle occupies with a single vallum an almost circular hill-top.

7. Dorchester (*Dwr-Ceaster*, the fort by the water), Sinodun, Blewbury *Castle*, Lowbury *Castle*, Perborough *Castle*,† where it was joined by a road from Streatley, Bucklebury Common, and Newbury, and Thatcham.‡

Both Sinodun and Blewbury, or Blewburton, Hills, may have had a twofold character, and been half-temple, half-fortress, as the latter is a terraced height, with a circular winding way like the sun-mounds in America.§

Perborough is a stronger fortress still, and stands in the centre of a district that is crowded with traces of ancient life. It contains hollows that may once have been the pit-

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* At Abingdon, from its height, position, and tradition, there can be little doubt that there was a fortified place, though possibly not an early camp of large size. Leland speaks of two camps there, the one called Serpen (possibly Shippin) Hill, north-east of the town, and the other called Barrow, west of the town. Some of the trenches of the former still remained in his time.

† *Per*, a rampart ; and *beorgh*, a fortified place or hill.

‡ At Thatcham, in the peat, was found a polished celt, 8 inches by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches ; and two others of almost similar dimensions, one polished and the other chipped, were found at Bank's Farm, Cookham, 4 feet below the surface of the peat. All this proves that the margin of the Kennet Valley was occasionally entered, and perhaps here and there crossed by known trackways when the weather was sufficiently dry.

§ Phené, N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 180.

dwellings, and its raised causeway and fragments of Roman masonry give evidence of successive occupation. Both Perborough and Grimsbury have their stoutest ramparts towards the north, as most of the hill-forts have, as if they were made by people advancing from the southward in constant dread of foes from the savage districts to the north. But savages are little influenced by ordinary military conditions; like Zulus, they would have swept round them and attacked as fiercely from the rear as in front. This strengthening may, therefore, be better attributed to later times, when Mercians fought with the men of Saxon Wessex, and pushed their frontier to the foot of the Berkshire ridgeway. South of the Kennet, the road from Hungerford passes south-east by Inkpen to Walbury *Castle*, where that from Kintbury meets it, so that this hill-fort guards both tracks. Similarly the southern road from Newbury must have crossed the Enborne by the Sandleford passage; but it may be doubted whether there were any fordways on the Kennet permanently passable except at Newbury and Reading.

Hence the importance throughout of these places. As will be seen, other peoples occupied them, and they grew and flourished because of their geographical position. But the Celt was their first settled inhabitant as far as we know yet.

Doubtless there were once many other trackways on the high ground; but only those remain which link chosen situations or those most favourable for cultivation. The affix *ton*, moreover, which predominates among the places through which these roads pass, is later than Celtic days, when the low ground was too damp for permanent settlements; but these places, none the less, probably lie along the ancient road-tracks that during summer's dryness led from ford to ford, and which, as the land cleared, became permanent lines of traffic.

In fact, the growth of the system of communication

must have been gradual; and, while many roads now in use may be as old as Celtic days, many others, like the ridgeway, have fallen into practical decay.

There was little real difference between these first invaders of the land. Both Celts and Belgæ were branches of the same great family; and, though possibly with minor variations, spoke, it is natural to believe, much the same tongue. Notwithstanding the Roman and other invasions that afterwards swept over Britain, these new-comers exercised but little real influence over the vast mass of the people with whom they came in contact. They killed them, absorbed them, or drove them away; but the language of the conquered still possessed vitality, and, unlike that of the Roman invaders, was never completely obliterated. This was more especially the case in districts that were least affected by these inroads. Thus in our modern language lingers many a Celtic word. Coat, basket, cart, pranks, prancing, happy, pert, sham, bran, crock, drill, flannel, gown, hem, pail, pitcher, ridge, and numerous other words are remnants of that language which was spoken in Berkshire before the Romans came. Similarly in place-names, such prefixes or terminations as Dor (Dwr), Combe (Cwm), wan or wann (a moor), din or dun (a hill or camp), and manor (maen-or, a stone boundary), indicate Celtic holdings or occupations. The early races have left their marks in the language as well as on the surface of the county.

It will be noticed that the majority of the barrows that have been opened contained urns, flints, and bones only, with no tools or ornaments of metal.

That is to say, the majority of the interments seem to have been Celtic. In fact, in very few cases have bronze implements been found, though they are not uncommon elsewhere. In the great highway of the Thames, bronze swords, spears, celts, palstaves, and a shield have been dredged up; and at St. Leonard's Hill, near Windsor,

were discovered a socketed celt and a spear-head of bronze. Another was found at Hagbourne.*

So that in Berkshire bronze is comparatively rare; showing that the Belgic tribes, who were most probably bronze-using people from their proximity to and friendliness with Gaul, did not extend far into the country. It affords further grounds for the conjecture that the Belgic Atrebates were checked by the great belt of jungle in the Kennet Valley, and having settled, left the hill-land beyond it to the exiled race they had pushed away.

Agriculture was probably little followed until long after the Roman invasion by the tribes of Northern Berks, who shifted from place to place, and from camping-ground to camping-ground, as their flocks and herds wanted fresh pastures.

Thus Berkshire lived on before the Romans came, with feuds among tribes of the same blood, and feuds with the Belgic invaders ; and, while the latter received aid and reinforcements from their brethren in what is now called Belgium, the Celtic tribes of Southern Britain still kept up friendly communications with their co-religionists the Veneti in Western France.

<center>* 'Archæologia,' 1803.</center>

CHAPTER III.

THE early Celtic invasions had, it has been suggested, penetrated into Berkshire from the south, and had been followed by a Belgic immigration from the east or south-east. The third, which was to leave the first really definite political mark upon the face of the Berkshire land, was again that of a southern race ; and, strangely enough, the Gallic, or parent, branch of the South Berkshire tribe, the Atrebates, had much to do with bringing Italian soldiers across the narrow seas. For Roman Cæsar had pushed his conquering legions into Gaul. The cause was one which has often been the indirect means of bringing the forces of civilization into collision with the barbarous tribes which lie along its borders. There were dissensions among the Gallic tribes. Southern Celts, led by the Hedui of Burgundy, and others of their race, had cause of quarrel with their northern brethren and with the Teutonic Belgæ. The latter, worsted in argument and in fight, had called in German arms to aid their cause ; so their opponents appealed to Rome in this semi-religious quarrel. Cæsar first assisted those who were nearest to him, and having done so, reduced both antagonists to a state of vassalage to Rome. But his fiercest opponents, the Belgæ, had received help from Britain, so, on reaching the northern shores of the Continent, he decided on also punishing those

who had assisted his late foes. Warned of their danger, many of the British tribes tendered their submission; and Commius, the Roman nominee over the Gallic Atrebates, was sent across the Channel to council his fellow-tribesmen to submit.

It is needless to examine in detail the Roman invasion of this country. Summarizing it briefly, it appears that in the year 55 B.C. Cæsar crossed from Gessoriacum (Boulogne), and after some indecisive actions, which affected but a small portion of the littoral, he returned to Gaul with hostages and promises of submission. Commius, who had been made prisoner by the islanders and released, accompanied him. The following year the invasion was resumed, and this time, turning the great forest of the Weald, he carried his legions across the Thames at Cowie Stakes, near Weybridge, and finally defeated the British King Cassivelaunus, and destroyed his town, which probably stood near St. Albans. With the defeat of their chief, the confederation of southern tribes under his leadership broke up, and the Berkshire Segontiaci, Ancalites, and Bibroci, made terms with the victor. They lay around the banks of the Thames, and were not only therefore more open to attack, but the news of the disaster to their compatriots would early reach them by the river, and the sooner strike terror into them.

Little is said about the Atrebates in this struggle; but, though it is scarcely likely they stood aloof from the general submission, they were farther from the great river, and may have been less and slowly influenced by the events that had taken place. But in the reign of Claudius, during the third invasion under Aulus Plautius, Cunobelin, the British leader, was defeated, and Camulodunum, now modern Colchester, was captured A.D. 43. Geta had defeated the Britons at Nettlebed, and one, if not the most important, battle in the war which raged along the Thames Valley seems to have been fought near Walling-

ford. The British Belgic tribes certainly assisted in this campaign; for after the defeat of the son of Cunobelinus (Shakespeare's Cymbeline), Vespasian attacked the Belgæ and Damnonii. After nearly thirty battles and the capture of twenty towns, he reduced them to submission. One of these towns must have been the old earthen fortress of the Segontians and of the Atrebates, on the borderland of Berks.

With the submission of these southern tribes, following on that of their Celtic neighbours, the opposition to the Roman occupation of the Berkshire district practically terminated. It became part of Britannia Prima, and its history during the Roman time was one of peace; though whether its people took part in the series of battles and insurrectionary movements, which later on culminated in the revolt and defeat of Boadicea, is doubtful. Apparently they did not as an entire clan; and it is likely, therefore, that this part of the country felt, earlier than more turbulent districts, the civilizing effect of the Roman rule.

Practically the whole island did not fall under foreign dominion until the reign of Vespasian and Titus, when Agricola, A.D. 78, carried his legions as far as the Scotch Tay; and, while he gained a final victory at Ardoch in Perthshire, his fleet sailed round and surveyed the northern coasts of the islands. Having done so, this wise and beneficent conqueror endeavoured to civilize the semi-savage tribes of Britain. ' He saw that this could only be effected by giving them a relish for the arts, and a taste for elegant pleasures. To this he excited them by his conversations in private, and by his public measures. He encouraged them to erect temples, forums, and houses. He caused the sons of the British chiefs to be instructed in the language and knowledge of their conquerors. Such measures produced rapid effects. The Britons soon began to adopt the Roman 'dress, and they changed the rude garb of their ancestors for the dignified toga. The

manners of the Romans also gradually took root among them, and they gained a taste for erecting porticos and baths, and indulging in other luxuries.' And so within the earthen rampart of the Belgic *Gwahl Vawr* grew up the walled city of Calleva, the chiefest British-Roman town in these parts.

The actual date of its construction is doubtful. In the deepest excavations have been found coins of Claudius, A.D. 50, and on the surface those of the latest emperors, as well as a memorial stone to Julia Domna, wife of Severus, A.D. 217; so that it may date as far back as the days of Agricola's wise rule. Whatever its age may be, it was the capital of the Berkshire Atrebates, the local centre of tribute, and the starting-point of many Berkshire roads. These united other places mentioned in the ancient records. The Itinerary of Antonine, which was written about A.D. 320, specifies four other towns in this district : namely, Spinæ, Thamesis, and Bibracte, in Berks, and Pontes in Surrey. The first mentioned has been identified with Speen, near Newbury. The name is similar, if Spinæ be pronounced as an Italian would, and as a Roman probably did, pronounce it ; and the Roman remains at Speen, its situation near well-known Roman roads, coupled with its name, are sufficient evidence in support of the hypothesis. Certainly it has all the appearance of a British holding above the marshy valley of the Kennet bottom, across which the narrow Celtic trackway passed by the ford at Newbury ; and in such a district it was more than probable that the Legionaries planted themselves on the habitable land which their adversaries had tilled. The first station may well have been at Speen Hill, though doubtless, as civilization increased, and the territory became more settled, it was moved nearer the Kennet ford.* But in Speen, with its ancient thorn trees, and traces of pre-Roman occupation, we may safely recognise the Spinæ of

* This is Mr. W. Money's opinion.

the Itinerary. Naturally, as the situation of Calleva has been questioned, that of Spinæ has had many localities assigned to it. The 'Slad' near Compton, on the Ilsley Downs, from the abundance of its Roman relics, is one of these ; but this requires that Calleva should be at Wallingford, which is, to say the least, not proven. Thamesis has been placed at Goring or Streatley, both from the relics found there, and from the meaning of the latter word, the lea or meadow near the *Straat* or *Stratum* of the Roman road that crossed there. Wallingford has also been suggested, and this lies very near the direction the northern road from Silchester to Dorocina* must have taken. But though Roman remains are found at all these places, and both the form of the old earth-wall of Wallingford, as well as some of its ruined masonry (which has herring-bone work), is of Roman style, it seems more probable that Streatley or Goring was the true site of Thamesis. Here, at any rate, an ancient passage across the Thames was marked by a raised causeway in the bed of the stream.

Bibracte is still more indeterminate. It has been thought that it was situated between Spinæ and Silchester, but of this there is not the least tangible evidence.† Other writers have suggested Bray-*wick*, Egham-*wick*, and *Wick*ham Bushes on Easthampstead Plain, as possible sites, and certainly Roman pottery, oyster-shells, tiles, and coins, have been found at all these places ; while the name 'Wick' is derivable from the Latin 'Vicus.' As, however, there is reasonable ground for conjecture that this very unimportant spot, occupying possibly as a halting-place on the line of road a British hamlet, was somewhere between Calleva and Pontes, it is possible that either Wickham Bushes or Egham Wick now mark the position of Bibracte.

* Dorchester, in Oxfordshire.
† 'Archæol. Handbook,' Godwin.

Of Pontes* there can be but little doubt. The mass of opinion, and the weight of evidence, is in favour of Staines. Above the present bridge is a small island, towards which the Roman road from Calleva directly points, and to cross the stream narrowed by the obstacle, and therefore convenient for the purpose, would require *two* bridges probably of wood ; hence the Pontes. The name of Staines, too, is a survival of Roman work. It was applied in many cases where the strong stone-work of the Roman, either in road, in bridge, or in buildings, had struck the imagination of the Saxon who followed in Roman footsteps, and who, ignorant of what Rome had done, re-named the place in some way as a place of Stones. Wherever these Roman towns may have been, they were united by roads. In nothing was the energy and skill of the conquerors more vigorously shown than in the construction of their highways. Doubtless they were not all made at the same period, and as late a date as Trajan's reign has been fixed for some of them. But they were at least commenced after the campaigns of Plautius and Agricola, when the power of rapid movement of the scattered maniples and cohorts was absolutely essential in a war in which the skilled few were opposed by the unskilled many.

At first the aboriginal trackways, though they were devious and winding, were still extensively employed ; but the military instincts of the new governors led them to see the advantage that concentration of their garrisons, in case of dire need, could give. The quickest road was to them the shortest road, and so their highways are as nearly straight as possible ; and while British roads had been only made on the surface of the soil, and were hence dependent for their value on its condition and the weather, the Roman soldier knew the value of ways that would be permanently

* Though not in Berks, it is necessary to fix this point to show how the Pontes-Calleva Road, which traverses so much of Southern Berkshire, ran.

good, and drained them, and made them strong and dry with stone and gravel. Such were the *viæ militares* made by Roman skill for military purposes. They were not constructed with a view to trade, or commerce, or local convenience at all. They were commenced by making two parallel furrows about 13 yards apart, and between these the ground was beaten hard and regularly metalled. In all wet or low ground the road was raised well above the natural surface. Even now, though long since degraded, their course can be marked along the fields by the hardness of the ground and the scantiness of the vegetation or the crops.

Of all the local names of places, that of Calleva appears most frequently in the Itineraries, and is therefore a good and reliable starting-point for an examination of Roman Berkshire. It may be accepted with but little doubt that modern Silchester represents the Calleva referred to. In Antonine's Itineraries the name occurs on three occasions:

In the VII. Iter. Clausentum (Bitterne, near Southampton).
Venta Belgarium (Winchester), M. P. x.*
Calleva† Atrebatum (Silchester), M. P. xxii.
Pontibus (Staines), M. P. xxii.
Londinio (London), M. P. xxiii.

In the XIII. Glevo (Gloucester).
Durocornovio, or Corinium (Cirencester), M. P. xiv.
Spinis (Speen), M. P. xv.
Calleva (Silchester), M. P. xv.

In the XIV. Cunetio (Marlboro').
Spinis (Speen), M. P. xv.
Calleva (Silchester), M. P. xv.

Thus Calleva formed a centre for the local military system, and the very repetition of its name shows its importance, not only as the position of a large garrison, as its

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* M. P. = Mille Passus, the Roman mile, which is equivalent to about 1,611 yards.

† Also written elsewhere Nalkua and Calcua (Kemble).

size indicates it was, but also as the centre of tribute and civilization in this part of Britain. It will be well to start with this as a centre therefore, and begin with the first-mentioned road, which was traced by the officers of the Senior Department of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, Berks, in 1856.

It passed due east by Park Lane, New Bridge, on the Loddon, crossed the Blackwater at Thatcher's Ford, passed through West Court (beyond which it is known as the 'Devil's Highway'), Crowthorne, and Easthampstead Plain (where a small curved by-road—a *via vicinalis*—leaves it as the road reaches the plateau, and curving through Wickham Bushes, returns to the main-road, where it again leaves the high ground of the plain), and the ponds south of Rapley Farm, in a direct line to Duke's Hill near Bagshot. Here it bent more to the north, and ran nearly parallel for a while to the present highway, touching the southern end of Charter's Pond, which owes its origin to the Roman embankment, passed near the Belvedere in Virginia Water, through the southern end of the artificial lake, through the yard of the Wheatsheaf Inn, and so to the small island in the Thames close to the bridge at Staines.

Rude pottery, such as fragments of mortaria, pierced 'incense' cups, and a few pieces of Samian ware, with tiles and coins, have been found at the British-Roman village of Wickham Bushes. The name itself betrays a Roman origin, for Wickham is but the Roman *Vicus* added to the British *Ham*. Both mean village. Pottery, again, has been found at Duke's Hill and along the roadside near Sunningdale; and remains of foundations, etc., near Bakeham House and Egham have led to the suggestion that here also might have been Bibracte. In Charter's Pond was found a life-sized statue of a gladiator, which is now in the garden of Mr. Waterer, of Bagshot. It is of Italian stone, and may well have been brought from Italy

to Londinium, and so up the Thames to Staines, and when being carried thence to Calleva to adorn its forum, in some moment of panic or during the Saxon invasion, it may have been cast into the pond by the roadside.

The British hill-fort of Eldebury on St. Ann's Hill near Chertsey, whence a track led to the fordway over the Thames at Laleham, was also replaced by three small Roman redoubts of square trace on the low ground near the river, thus guarding the site of the present ferry and flank of the military way; and it is possible that the somewhat rectangular entrenchment of weak trace at Sunninghill Station may be a temporary Roman camp, constructed as a guard-fort during the formation of this great south Berkshire road in Roman times.

From the southern entrance to Calleva ran the road to Venta Belgarum, as the fortress of the Gwent (Winchester) was now called. Sir Richard Colt Hoare was of opinion that running into this was the other great road through Vindomis (Finkley Farm, Andover) to Sorbiodunum (Sarum). But the most recent survey indicates this road as leaving Calleva by its western gate, as the prolongation of the portion between Fosse Cottage and Tadley in a straight line would seem also to suggest. From this west gate also started the road to Speen.

It is difficult to trace this latter highway. It was possibly less marked on the dry, gravelly heathland of Silchester and Brimpton Commons; and as this land was the earliest after the downland to be brought under cultivation because it was the easiest to clear and till, so would the traces of the Roman work be the most likely to disappear. But there is one clue that may give its direction, and that is the Nymph or Imp Stone situated just one mile from the city. Its name may have been derived from a figure once carved on it, which might have been thought a *nymph*, or from the *Imp* of *Imperator* having been cut on it; but at present it is a smooth block of stone with two

hollows, one on either side, set in a plot of turf. It is probably a milestone or milliarium on the Spinæ road, though tradition has appended to it a mysterious origin. Thrown from the city by a giant, the impress of whose finger and thumb is shown by the two hollows, it is said to turn itself round when the clock strikes twelve. No one has seen it do so, but the story still lives.

But joining this stone with the west entrance of Calleva, and prolonging the line, carries it to a definite point of passage on the Enborne, which may well be ancient, at Knightsbridge ; and thence it may have run in a straight line to the ford at Newbury.

This is the most direct course it could have taken, and it must be borne in mind that the Romans were distinctly in favour of such straightness ; but it may nevertheless not have followed the general rule, and may have turned at the 'Imp Stone' to cross the stream at Brimpton, again turned there along the high land parallel to the Kennet, and made yet another bend at 'Bury's Bank' towards the Kennet Ford. There are Celtic barrows on this line at Baughurst, about three miles from the 'Imp Stone.' Brimpton Church contains Roman hypocaust tiles, though these may have come from anywhere ; and on Greenham Heath have been dug up fragments of glass and of Samian or Arezzan ware.

Whatever way it went, it terminated at Spinæ, or Speen, whence two other military roads ran to the westward ; the one to Cunetio (Folly Farm and Mildenhall, Marlboro') through Hungerford, and the other to Corinium.

There is little to indicate the former ; but the latter has been clearly discerned. By uniting the ford or bridge at Newbury with Fox (probably once Fosse) Farm, on the Upper Baydon road, through which it is known the Roman road to the westward ran, it will be seen that it practically follows the existing roadway ; and, passing close to Wickham and Speen Church, it reaches the Newbury fordway of the Kennet by the lower road. Near it are villa remains at Hunt's

Green, Wyfield Farm, Wickham, Shefford, and Lamborne, on the pleasant slopes overlooking the Lamborne stream. At Wyfield were fragments of a bronze armilla, a spindle whorl of Kimmeridge clay, flanged tiles of Durobrivian ware; at Boxford Rectory, and at the base of Boxford Hill, were fragments of pottery and numerous coins; and one 'find,' of about 800 in an earthen jar, contained coins of Constantine, Julian, Valens, Valentinian, and Gratian, showing that the deposit at least dated as far back as A.D. 383. Coins have also been found at Newbury, Lamborne, and Westbrook.

The last of the great military roads left Calleva by its northern entrance, and passed by Thamesis to Dorocina (Dorchester) in Oxfordshire. But it is traceable from the city for nearly a mile, and appears to pass through its extramural cemetery, for stone coffins and remains of interments have been found just outside the wall between it and the earthen rampart of the former British town. The prolongation of this line crosses the Kennet at *Tile* Mill, and passes near Basildon, where there are the remains of a Roman villa, to Goring, where coins, vases, and pavements have been found, and South Stoke. From this point it is lost; but it may have either followed the Icknield way parallel to the river as far as the road from Bensington (near which is a 'cold harbour'), or followed the left bank of the river to Wallingford, and beyond.

To have gone straight to Dorchester from Goring would have been in direct prolongation of the northern road from the former place, but would have involved two more passages of the Thames. There is another possibility to be considered, but that must be followed backwards from Dorocina. A line joining this place with Bradfield lies almost in direct prolongation of the road leading north, unites several short, straight pieces of existing road, and passes through Streatley, where there are Roman remains, as well as at Goring on the opposite bank. From here a slight bend

would unite it with the north road from Silchester ; and this course would only involve one bridge across the Thames.

There were other roadways of a less ambitious kind. There are four varieties mentioned besides the *viæ militares ;* namely, the *vicinales* or branch roads, the *privatæ* or private roads, the *agrariæ* or county roads, and the *deviæ* or by-roads. Probably all the ancient trackways which were utilized by the Romans received the latter name ; but one Berkshire road, the ' Port-way,' which follows the lower, and later, Icknield street from Woolstone (near Uffington) to Wantage, where it leaves it, and then passes by Hendred, Harwell, and Brightwell to Wallingford, may have been a *via vicinalis.* It was not originally Roman from its name. Wallingford shows Roman work in its wall and Roman form in its trace ; and near the road a long barrow on White Horse Hill contained skeletons of men of short stature, whose teeth were stained by the obolus they carried to pay their passage across the dreary Styx ; showing that Roman soldiers, or Romanized Britons, died there and were buried. At East Hendred was dug up an earthen jar, full of gold and silver coins ; and on Stains-combe Down, to the south of the ridge, were also skeletons irregularly buried, and with them were the iron nails of caligæ or shoes.

The Celtic track, which ran from Spinæ by Shaw, Grimsbury, Hampstead Norris, and Compton, whence it sent branches to Lowbury and Blewbury on the one hand, and on the other by Aldworth to Streatley, was also Romanized, and may have been a vicinal way. In Shaw Crescent there were remains of solid Roman roadway work ; in Shaw Church Roman tiles ; at Grimsbury more made road ; and in Streatley Ford was a raised causeway. Roman coins, pottery, and two milliaria have been found at Streatley and elsewhere, and pottery, oyster-shells, and so on, both at Perborough and Limborough ; and at Compton were collected upwards of 2,000 gold, silver, and copper coins of all

dates from Claudius and Vespasian to Carausius and the Constantines, of which five hundred were found in a single jar. Villas with tessellated pavements existed at Hampstead Norris, at Wellhouse, Marlstone, Beech and Ealing Farms, and at Frilsham, where also was a domestic altar, with the inscription ' Jovi ;' thus lining the pleasant slopes overlooking the upper waters of the Pangbourne, along which they may have extended, more or less, until the northern road from Silchester, and next the Thames, were reached.

Similarly the Cunetio-Spinæ road may have been continued, as a vicinal road, along the British trackway over Bucklebury Common by Englefield to Reading. Then it seems to have crossed the Kennet (where an amphora was found in digging for clay at the Katesgrove pits), and again the Loddon at Twyford; and so by way of Weycock Field, or 'Castle Acre' (near St. Lawrence Waltham), which derives its name from a Roman fort that is said to have stood there, to the ' Vicus' of Bray.

All along this line there are indications of the survivals of names such as *Stret* Green, *Grymediche*, Paley *Street*, *Bray* Hill, which indicate a British or Romano-British usance ; and at Downs Place, St. Lawrence Waltham, and Bray itself, the presence of coins of Vespasian, Constans, Constantinus, Constantius, Valens, Gallienus, Valentinus, and Arcadius, show that the occupation must have been continuous, and lasted till the end of the empire.

The rectangular entrenchments in Maidenhead Thicket, one of which was 200 yards across, may have been, like that at Sunninghill, either the guard-fort built during the construction of this road, or may have been centrally placed at the old British village there to cover the fords at Bray and above Maidenhead. The undoubtedly Celtic path— that passing from Marlow by the tumulus near Cookham through Maidenhead Thicket, Bray, St. Leonard's Hill to Old Windsor and Staines—was of course utilized, and Roman relics were occasionally left.

Of course it must be remembered that the Roman occupation represents centuries of life. Only under the firm rule of Agricola did the country first lend itself seriously to the arts of peace. With quiet settlement of towns came villa and suburban residences, which communicated with the great military roads, made purely for strategic purposes, by the ancient routes. Doubtless they were improved, and in some cases Romanized, with metalling. These villas seem to have been situated because of the convenience or beauty of their sites, in the same way as the Romano-British cities had occupied those of the Celtic predecessors for purposes of trade and taxation. Still, no doubt many a purely British village had in it Roman wares and Roman coins from plunder, theft, or commerce. Their presence, therefore, in such situations only proves that they existed during Roman times, not that they themselves were of necessity original Roman towns.

Following these lines of Roman and Romanized roadway, or at any rate not far from them, Roman remains may be expected. In some cases the Britons themselves may have improved their poor villages after the Roman type. But this at least is undoubted, that where tiles, tesseræ of pavements, coins, and especially oyster-shells, are found on ancient sites, these indicate the period of Roman occupation. Pottery is more doubtful, unless it can be clearly identified as Samian, Upchurch, or Durobrivian ware.

Names of places corrupted from their original spelling and pronunciation are often a guide. Thus *street*, *stone*, and *stretton* (as *Stret* Green, Paley *Street*, near Bray) are often found in connection with places near a Roman road, taking their origin from 'stratum.' Similarly *wick* (whence Bray*wick*, *Wick*ham, Egham *Wick*) is derivable from 'Vicus ;' and 'Cold Harbour' (applied to isolated buildings or farms, as near Cukhamsley, Compton, and Walling-

ford) can be traced either to *col*, a hill, and *arbhar*,* an army, or *col* and *arbor*, a tree ; or from *col* (the abbreviation of coloniæ) and *arva*, fields. In the *coln* of Colnbrook and elsewhere again lies the trace of *colonia*, and the *ceaster* of the Saxons is but a modification of the *castrum* of the Legionaries.

Barrows of Roman origin are rare in this district. Both cremation and inhumation were practised in the early days of the occupation ; but the former ceased in the fifth century, owing to the influence exerted by the introduction of Christianity. The cinerary urns, of the commonest type, were large spherical vessels of dark clay, capable of holding about two gallons ; and stone coffins have been found at Combe Down, and on the Berkshire side of Silchester.

But the Roman influence on Britain was indirect rather than direct. It passed away and left little trace. So slight was its effect on the character of the British people, that scarcely one Roman word was left in their language when the conquerors deserted them. Their power was solely municipal ; their government purely military in character, and one of towns linked together by great military roads. They were too far from the great heart of the Roman empire to feel a part of its vast system, and the current of life that emanated therefrom beat but feebly at the extremities of the overgrown body. Outside the immediate atmosphere of its cities the Roman influence was nil. The British, as a body, were strangers to them, and had not either assimilated them, or been themselves absorbed. The racial feeling and repugnance seem to have been too strong for a real admixture.

The history of Roman Britain is one of contest with the hostile tribes upon its borders. Britain 'was a Roman Algeria, or an English Hindostan.' Our holding of India is identical in character ; we are aliens in tongue, in feeling, and in thought. The rural populations and the bulk of the

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* Murray.

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people may submit to our rule, and even acknowledge its justice, but they love us not. No admixture of the races is possible.

But there is yet another point of resemblance. As the Belgæ conquered and were probably first hated and then endured by the early Celts, so is there little love lost between the Hindu and the Mahometan who first vanquished him. And as the Roman invasion united some of the diverse British tribes to oppose it, so is our military history in India one of either fighting both sections of the natives, or getting one to assist us against the other. The Romanized Briton finds his prototype in the modern Baboo, with his superficial varnish, and was probably as weak as he. If England resigned India to its own hands alone, far fewer centuries than have elapsed since Roman days to now would suffice to sweep into absolute oblivion all traces of her rule. And yet the efforts of the Roman governors had been as great, comparatively, as those of our own Eastern Satraps. They had built and fortified great towns, whose massive masonry still exists. They had fashioned glorious temples, and taught the beauty that might be made to surround the domestic home. They had introduced that system of municipal government, the principles of which still form the very backbone of our social system; and they had shown the conquered race the delicacy and loveliness of peace.

Their beacon-fire on Rutupiæ, often the headquarters of the 'Count of the Saxon shore,' had thrown across the Channel the flame of the first lighthouse, that harbinger of goodwill to all mankind ; and lastly, under Roman rule may possibly have come the final blessing of Christianity. For tradition says that as early as the year 60 it made its first appearance on these shores, and in the second century it had spread from the Christian congregations in Gaul across the Straits. It also relates how, during the reign of Diocletian, St. Alban was martyred at Veru-

lamium, together with Aaron and Julius, two citizens of Caerleon ; while at the first council at Arles, A.D. 314, three British Bishops of York, London, and Lincoln were present.* Some of these early bishops and priests were sufficiently educated to contend with Augustine himself; and one of the last acts of Roman power in the island was the expulsion of the Pelagian heretics of Britain, in A.D. 446. Lastly, the inhabitants of the northern parts of the islands had been Christianized by Celtic or other missionaries.

Doubtless the churches were but poor wooden, straw-thatched structures which the coming storm was absolutely to sweep away, for even the religion was local. It penetrated but little into the heart and mind of man, for it was the creed of the conqueror. It is a question even whether the mass of the Celtic tribes themselves ever left the faith of their forefathers or ceased to worship the serpent and the sun.

* Tradition states that British crosses and other Christian relics were found in Saxon days at Abingdon.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SAXON CONQUEST.

THE fifth century of the Christian era saw the end of the Roman domination in Britain. The invasion of the Picts from the North, which had received active sympathy and assistance from many a British clan, had hitherto been with difficulty stemmed.

Saxons and Norsemen, Jutes and Angles, sea-pirates of all sorts, ravaged the southern shores for plunder as early as the year 364. The mighty empire of Rome fell to pieces at last, and Honorius, to strengthen its feeble heart, recalled his legions from all distant shores, and left Britain to self-government, self-defence, and despair.

The new wave of conquest was, like the Belgic, an Eastern one ; it came from the northern part of the European continent, and about A.D. 449 the Jutes, under Hengist and Horsa, were allowed to settle in Kent. They rapidly extended their conquests over that country ; and, having slain the British King Vortigern, formed the first kingdom of the Heptarchy. In 477 Ælla, with his sons Cymen, Wlencing and Cissa, landed at Cymenes Ora (Keynor), and in 491 they had conquered the counties of Sussex and Surrey south of the Weald forest, and formed the kingdom of the South Saxons, Regnum, the chief town of the Romanized Britons, becoming Cissan-ceaster, or the fortress of Cissa.

Similarly, the Anglian kingdoms of the East Saxons and Mercians were founded along the left bank of the Thames, until finally, in A.D. 519, Saxon Cerdic, with his son Cynric, landed on the coast of Hampshire, and pushed northward by Venta Belgarum round the great forest of the Andreadsweald. Being repeatedly reinforced, he first took the Isle of Wight from the Jutes, and then captured Venta, which became, as Wintan-ceaster, the capital of the West Saxons. Gradually their rule extended until it comprised Berks, Hants, Wilts, Dorset, Devon, and part of Cornwall. Thus Berkshire became a part of Wessex, whose northern borders in King Cynric's days reached the Thames. In what year Atrebatian Calleva was destroyed is doubtful. One story is that when holding out for Allectus in 294, it was besieged and burnt by Asclepiodatus. Another states that Ælla, the South Saxon, after taking Caer-Andred (Anderida or Pevensey) advanced on Basingstoke in 490, encamping at ' Ellesfield ' by the way, and fired the town of Calleva by tying firebrands to sparrows' tails. This seems somewhat mythical, as it is scarcely likely that having got thus far they would have fallen back again to their ships. That it was burnt, and by Saxons, is most probable, for it would have had time to have again arisen from its ashes had it been destroyed during the Roman occupation. Even the story of the sparrows may be but a poetical rendering of the plumed flame-tipped arrows which may have been used to fire the town and distract the attention of the defenders on the wall. It is most likely that it fell into the hands of Cerdic or Cynric, in the natural extension of the Wessex kingdom.

Roman roads, and all the other marks of that marvellous civilization, were fast disappearing before insurgent Britons and still fiercer Saxons. Storm and pillage were quickly obliterating the traces of the past. Calleva had perished, never to rise again ; its very history was to be

forgotten ; its ruins to become a quarry which furnished
neighbouring villages with squared stone, and eventually
helped Norman monks to build the Abbey of Reading.
No longer a centre of commerce, tribute, or military govern-
ance, the *Gwahl Vawr* of the Belgæ, the Calleva of the
Romans, became the *Sil-ceaster* of the Saxons, and ceased
there.—With its destruction, and that of the wooden bridges
at Pontes, the extremities of the great Roman road of
Berkshire were lost, and that which had echoed to the
tramp of Roman legionary became deserted and grass-
grown.   Legend hung around it, and myth grew up over
it as its origin sank further and further back into obscurity,
until it became the 'Devil's Highway.'   Its original military
use was gone.   Its trace was strategic, not commercial.
Trade and commerce in that stormy Saxon time may have
felt that the silent Thames, or the more open downland,
were safer routes than the Roman road.   What little traffic
there was chose other paths.   It concentrated at that angle
where the Kennet joined the Thames, and where the Saxon
family of the Radingas had founded Reading.   There was
a vast difference between this wave of invasion and the
preceding one.   The pagan Saxon was ruthless and cruel
in his conquests, and his very religion tended to increase
his lust for battle and destruction.   Doubtless the first
raids, weak in number, did little more than secure landing-
places, which formed *points d'appui* for the operations of
fresh hordes.   Only as the numbers increased into armies
were the ravages other than local or littoral.   But with the
increasing feebleness of the Romano-Britains came increas-
ing boldness on the part of the Saxon.   Wherever he went
he left his track in fire and in sword.   Only the women
and children were kept as slaves, and all the rest were
forced away or slaughtered.   The very term 'Saxon,' as
used by modern Celts in Ireland and Scotland as one of
reproach, is a survival of this feeling of hatred between
the people and the invaders, in the same way as the

Teutonic Saxon called the British aborigines Wealas or strangers, from which arose the name Welsh. And yet, having so grasped the land, they, naturally agrarian and domestic, held it as Roman never had. The Saxon foot has left its trace on English soil, a trace not confined to a few cities and a few roads, but wide-spread and well-known. Paganism swept out previous religions almost completely. Where a faint trace of Christianity may have still lingered it lay beyond the first fierce burst of the invading tide in the harder north.

Thus the marks of the early Saxon lie in destroyed cities and villas, and then in the names of settlements. At first they had not become by residence in England, or by admixture with the Angles, what we call 'Anglo-Saxons.' The great kingdoms quarrelled among themselves, as might be expected ; and the borderland was often a scene of strife between Mercians, Angles, and Wessex men. Thus in 628 King Cynegils of Wessex, and his son Cwichelm, fought with King Penda of Mercia at Cirencester, and this probably resulted in the extension of Wessex to the north of the Thames.* His successor Cenwalh, in 648, granted to his nephew Cuthred† (son of Cwichelm) 3,000 hides of land at Æscesdun on the Berkshire Hills ; but in 661 Penda's son, Wulfhere, drove Cenwalh 'from Pontes-byrig as far as the ridge of Æscesdun.' Thus the frontier line of Wessex, which Cynric and Cynegils had, despite the Angles, carried far into Oxfordshire, probably crept farther south. Wulfhere in 675 again joined issue with King Æscwin, of Wessex,‡ at 'Bedan

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* This seems all the more likely as Birinus, about A.D. 634, preached before Cynegils at his *city of Dorchester*, which is on the Oxfordshire bank of the Thames. See also 'Transactions of the N. D. F. C.,' vol. ii., p. 91.

† Vide p. 82.

‡ It may be useful to record here the list of the sovereigns of Wessex :

heafde,' which may possibly, though it is not clear, have been at Baydon, near the western frontier of Berkshire, or Beedon. (written also Bedene and Bidun), near the Ilsley Downs. The result of this battle is unknown, but probably the Thames still continued the nominal boundary line between the kingdoms until 752, when Cuthred of Wessex must have regained a portion of the Oxfordshire territory as far as the Burford Hills. For, later on, Bensington, on the left bank of the Thames, is mentioned as the place where his successor, weak King Cynewulf of Wessex, held his court;* and whence he was driven back by Offa of Mercia, by the battle of Bensington, in 777, to the line of Uffington and Letcombe Castles, on the Ridgeway Hills.†

The Saxon Chronicle relates that 'Cynewulf and Offa fought at Benson, and Offa took the town.'‡ During this same campaign the Castle of King Cynewulf, at Witham, a few miles north of Cumnor, and which had so disturbed the propriety of the nuns of Cissa's house, was also taken ; and here Offa built a palace. Thus once more the Thames Valley here was in Mercian hands, and the hills remained a boundary between the two realms for nearly fifty years.

A.D. 519, Cerdic.	A.D. 676, Centwine.
„ 534, Cynric.	„ 685, Cædwalla.
„ 559, Ceawlin.	„ 688, Ina.
„ 597, Ceolwulf.	„ 728, Ethelred.
„ 611, Cynegils.	„ 740, Cuthred.
„ 614, Cynegils and Cwichelm.	„ 754, Sigebryht.
„ 643, Cenwalh.	„ 755, Cynewulf.
„ 672, Sexburga (Cenwalh's Queen).	„ 784, Beohtric.
„ 674, Æscwin.	„ 800, Egbert.

* It is situated near Wallingford. It must have been a place of some importance, for it is called a ' city ' in the Chronicle, and a Royal ' Vill ' even as late as Camden's time.

† *Blackwood's Magazine.*

‡ This battle seems to have been fought at Sandfield, as arms, armour, and swords have been dug up there (Hearne).

During that time the old Celtic earthworks covering the trackways to the Kennet were probably improved and occupied by the Wessex men.

Probably the ' Grims,' or the ' Devil's Ditch,' that, passing below Cuckhamsley, runs roughly parallel to the Ridgeway, was the boundary line after this campaign, for the ditch is on the *south* side of the vallum, and must therefore have been made by the northern or Mercian tribe. Its name denotes antiquity, and mediæval tradition tells that the devil dug it in a single night, and the scrapings of his spade made the Mound of Cuckhamsley.

But one great event happened, which had much to do with the final union of the Saxon tribes. The Mercians had been bitter pagans, and the wars between their King Penda and the Christian Oswald of Northumbria, in the seventh century, had been strongly tinged with religious antagonism.

For Christianity had taken fresh and final root in the south as well as in the north, and the central Mercian kingdom was soon the only heathen realm in the Heptarchy. In 590 A.D., Pope Gregory, who had been struck by the beauty of the Anglian slaves in the slave-market of Rome, ascended the papal throne. He aimed at Christianizing the island, and in 597 sent an able and enthusiastic priest as the first new missionary to Britain. Augustine's task was easy, for Athelbert of Kent had married Berta, the Christian daughter of Charibert of France. She had been permitted to retain her faith at the court of her pagan husband, and her priest had officiated at the Church of St. Martin at Canterbury. So that the new creed rapidly spread. Augustine became the first Bishop of Canterbury. Birinus, sent by Pope Honorius, became the Apostle of Wessex, and preached before King Cynegils at his city of Dorchester. But as Christianity had, before the arrival of these Romish priests, already, by Berta's influence, obtained a fresh footing in Kent, so a much older form, derived from

the teaching of Celtic missionaries long before, had sur-
vived in Anglian Northumbria. When this true Anglican
Church was established, it is difficult to say; but it is
known that at the time when Birinus came, Oswald, the
Christian King of Northumbria, was a suitor for the hand
of the daughter of King Cynegils of Wessex. Mercia
alone remained heathen until much later. In 634 Cynegils
became Christian, like his son-in-law; and Birinus, the first
Bishop of Wessex, had his see at Dorchester.

Tradition has been long busy with him. At Churn
Knob on the Ridgeway are barrows, and the *cairns*, whence
its name comes. Sacred in Celtic time, it retained its
character; for either the Saxon conquerors still revered
the holy place of Celtic days, or possibly there may have
been still a strong remembrance of an earlier Christianity
in the minds of Berkshire men, causing them to select this
well-known spot where the Gospel should once more be
preached to them. The sacred hill bears the tradition
of his preaching, and 'Berin's Hill' across the Thames
retains the tradition of his name.

It is strange that there remained no relic or trace of the
early British Church, which legend rather than tradition
tells us had been founded by the hands of Joseph of
Arimathæa and of St. Paul, at the time when Augustine
came. But it is hardly likely that the former teaching
had made any real impression upon the bulk of the people.
Along the Roman roads and in the Roman towns it may
have existed and even flourished; but there is no evidence
among the purely British clans of such cordiality of feeling
to their conquerors as would lead to a communion in faith.
The worship of Christ, like that of Jupiter, was the cult of
the conqueror, and to the true Briton therefore a badge as
of servitude. With the fall of Romish power fell all active
traces of her government and her religion. Insurgent
Celtic bands, and wave after wave of Saxons, Jutes, and
Angles, would in their fierce days have swamped a stronger

plant than the tender flower of the new creed. Probably the provincial Britons were heathens still, and bitter ones. Certainly the Saxons were pagans, and ruthless too. Between them all it is not to be wondered that to all external appearance the flood of paganism should have drowned the faint light of the Gospel—in those parts, at any rate, which had been most exposed to the storm.

Thus Wessex, already Saxon, became in feeling Christian and Anglo-Saxon as time went on. This kingdom of the Heptarchy was not only to furnish some of the wisest rulers of these days, but was to include in its embrace all other kinglets, and thus lead the way to one English monarch and one English land. Ina of Wessex was the first of these far-seeing men. He governed with a gentle hand, encouraged intermarriage with the old Celtic families, ruled his subjects with the same law, and so united in loyal bonds the people of his realm. He founded a school at Rome, and taxed his subjects one penny per house for its support. This *Rom-feoh* or *Rome-scot* was the origin of ' Peter's Pence,' and took its rise among these Berkshire hills. Ina (or Alfred, it is doubtful which) divided the country into shires, and these again into ' hundreds,' an organization based on the representation of a hundred families. He died in 728, and, after many wars, Egbert advanced his boundaries once more to the Thames, and then successively pushed his dominion over South-Saxons and Kentish men, and finally over East-Saxons, Mercians, and Northumbrians. Thus in 827 he, a Wessex man, and therefore in a sense a Berkshire man, united all the Saxon kingdoms together under his sceptre, though some of them were partially independent still.

But another storm of paganism was to overspread the land, and bring with it the iron tonic of the sword, and the infusion of a newer blood into the Anglo-Saxon states. It seems almost as if the conversion of the race had tended to weaken it, and that with the virtues of civilization sprang

up also its vices. For during the coming years the Saxon fighting was not of the best, until Alfred came. The Scandinavian Vikings ravaged the English shores with almost as much impunity and violence as had the fore-fathers of its then occupants. Under the guidance of Danish Odin this time, instead of under Saxon Woden, they burnt and made prisoners, and destroyed Christian churches, as Ælla and Cynric had fired Roman temples and Roman fanes. Seamen, like the Saxons, they based their operations on the sea, and the rivers were the best high roads for their march. Still, they were no mere vagrant marauders, these Danes. They came in increasing numbers, with wives and families, to conquer, to settle, and to possess the land their swords had won. In 867 they had taken York and overrun Northumbria ; in 868 they had seized Mercia and captured Nottingham ; and in 870 had destroyed East Anglia, and murdered its King, Edmund the Saint. So it was that at length in 871 the cloud burst over the central kingdom of Wessex. Whether they marched on land from Peterborough and Thetford, after the capture of East Anglia, as far as Reading, met by their ships as transports on the Thames, or whether they used the water-way and river-banks entirely, is uncertain ; but they appeared late in March opposite the settlement of the Radingas and landed on the King's Mead, that open ground lying between the Kennet and the Thames.*

As Palæolithic man had come there, as Celt, Roman, and Saxon had occupied it, so the later invaders, both Danish and Norman, seized this strategic centre. And the Dane, drawing up his ships upon the shore, and fortifying his landing-place with an entrenchment which ran from stream to stream, placed in front of it and of the British and Saxon village that lined the Kennet bank a great circular earthwork, the half of which was standing not forty years ago on the 'Forbury.' The very name of

* Prof. T. Rupert Jones, ' N. D. F. C. Proc.,' vol. i.

'Forbury' shows that other races had recognised the defensive capabilities of the height, for there probably stood before these times the fort before the burgh, and the tumulus of its ancient chief.*

Thus three days after their landing they improved or rather rebuilt the ancient redoubt, for its circular form points to a Danish origin; and then sent forth their foragers to plunder and bring food. They did not advance far along the high ground, for descending to Englefield near Theale, they were met by a Saxon force under Ethelwulf, the Eaorlderman of Berkshire, and driven back. But the Saxons pushed their success too far; for, reinforced by troops under Alfred and Ethelred the King, they advanced three days later to Reading, and were roughly handled in the attempt to storm the Danish camp. They fell back defeated, and Ethelwulf was slain. They seem to have retreated by Englefield either on Wantage or Wallingford, for it was in this direction that the Danes pursued them four days later. Then, leaving Chief Guthrum in charge of the camp, the Danes sallied forth by Englefield, Bradfield, Ashampstead, and Aldworth, to reach the high land of the downs.

But they were destined to fail in their effort to seize the key to Berkshire. For somewhere upon 'Ashdown' was fought that great battle of Æscesdun, which was one of the turning-points in our national history. It was the first real check the invaders had received; it roused once more the flagging Saxon hopes; it made of Alfred a warrior and leader of men as well as a lawgiver; and it prevented the English or Anglo-Saxon element in England from being swamped by the Danish. It was one of those incidents which eventually led to a further admixture or amalgamation of the conquerors and conquered, and which therefore was one of the causes which has added to the mixed blood of the Anglo-Saxon an infusion from the

* 'History of St. Lawrence's Church,' Rev. C. Kerry.

strong Danish stock.   Bishop Asser, of Sherborne, has
told us the story of the battle as he received it from an
eye-witness, and we will let him tell it himself before we
attempt to fix the locality of this great Berkshire fight.
This is how the pagan Danes met the Christian Saxons
on the Berkshire hills :

'The Pagans, dividing themselves into two bodies of
equal strength, draw up their lines—for they had there
two kings and several jarls—and they give the central
part of the army to the two kings (Baegsæg and Half-
dene), and the rest to all the jarls (Fraena, Hareld, and the
two Sidrochs).   When the Christians perceive this, they in
the same manner divide themselves into two bodies, and
draw themselves up with equal diligence.   But Alfred
comes more speedily and readily with his men, as we have
heard from trustworthy reporters who saw it, and arrives at
the place of battle ;   for his brother, Ethelred the king,
was still remaining in the tent in prayer hearing the Mass,
and declaring that he would not depart thence alive before
the priest should end the Mass, nor would desert the divine
service for the human.   And he did as he had said, which
faith of the Christian king availed greatly with the Lord,
as in the sequel shall be fully shown.

' The Christians therefore had decreed that Ethelred the
king with his own forces should fight against the two
Pagan kings ;   but Alfred, his brother, with his companies,
would know how to try the chance of war against all the
leaders of the Pagans.   Thus strongly were they placed on
either side when the king was lingering long in prayer,
and the Pagans were prepared and had hastened to the
place of conflict.   Alfred then being second in command,
when he could no longer endure the ranks of the foe
except he either retreated from the fight or dashed forward
against the hostile forces before his brother's arrival, at last
boldly, after the manner of a wild boar, guided the Christian
forces against the foe as had been determined, though still

the King had not come. Thus relying on the guidance of God, and supported by His help, with the lines drawn up closely, he moves forward the standard with speed against the enemy. But to those who know not the place it must be explained that the site of the battle was unequal for the belligerents, for the Pagans had occupied beforehand a higher position ; but the Christians drew up their lines from a lower place.

'There was also in the same place a single thorn-tree of very small size, which we ourselves have seen with our own eyes. Around this, therefore, the hostile armies all with a great shout meet together in conflict, the one acting most wickedly, the other to fight for life and friends and country. And when they fought for some time fiercely and very cruelly on both sides, the Pagans by the divine judgment could endure the attack of the Christians no longer, and the chief part of their forces being slain they took to flight disgracefully. And in this place one of the two Pagan kings and five jarls were slain ; and many thousands on the Pagan side, both in that place and along the whole breadth of the plain of Æscendune, where they had been everywhere scattered, were slain far and wide. For there fell their King Baegsæg, and Jarl Sidroc the elder, and Jarl Sidroc the younger, and Jarl Obsbern, and Jarl Fraena, and Jarl Hareld ; and the whole army of the Pagans was put to flight till the night, and even to the following day, until those who escaped arrived at the citadel, for the Christians pursued them until night, and overthrew them everywhere.'

'Never before or since,' says a Saxon writer later on, 'was ever such slaughter known since the Saxons first gained England by their armies.' All the next day the rout was followed up, until the shattered remnants gained the shelter of their fort. Whether it was absolutely abandoned by the Danes after their defeat is doubtful ; but it is recorded that fourteen days later, Alfred and Ethelred

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suffered a reverse at Basing, which shows, at any rate, that some portion of the enemy's forces had retreated to the south.

The site of the battle of Ashdown has been the subject of peculiar controversy.* The term 'Ashdown' may well have been applied to the entire ridge ; and the western portion, which now alone bears the name, may be but the survival of its more extended appellation. Near Letcombe 150 years ago was a place called Letcombe *Ashes ; Ashen-*Pen was a little farther east ; *Ash*bridge lies south of Ilsley, which may take its name from *Hildelæg* (battle-field) ; and not far from it are *Banager* (Slaughter Acre), *Ash* Close, Cold *Ash*, and, to the eastward, *Ash*amstead. There is thus a chain of names that bear upon the word 'Ash,' and it is likely that in many of the clayey hollows of the ridge these trees were plentiful in Alfred's time. The name again appears, and this time more definitely, in that part of the Saxon Chronicle which refers to the year 1006, where it states that 'when the Danes had ravaged and destroyed Wallingford, they spent the following night at Cholsey, and from Cholsey they went along *Ashdown* to Cwichelm's Hill.' As there is no doubt about the position of the latter point and of Wallingford, the field for conjecture at once becomes narrowed.†

Most of the old writers have placed the site of the battle near Ashbury, at the *western* extremity of the ridge, both because of its name and of the false local tradition of the origin of the 'White Horse,' and also because there was a fortified position in front of it. But it seems somewhat hazardous to assume that these rude clans, in such rapid and partial operations as these, necessarily made earth-

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* Wise suggests, on Leland's authority, Ashdown in Sussex ; Sumner, Ashdown in Essex ; Kennet, Ashendon in Bernwood Forest, Bucks ; Gibson, Aston near Cholsey.

† Eadred is also said to have given eight hides of land at 'Cumtune' (Compton), near the hill called 'Æscesdune.'

works. To cover their port of embarkation was natural ; but to assume that so many cubic feet of earth and chalk could be thrown up by inferior tools in the brief time at the disposal of either party seems an error. The calculation of the amount of material to be raised can easily be made. Again, the occupation of a hill-fort is not necessarily the wisest thing to do, or the strongest position to take up. The adversary who does so is very materially confined to it. If successful, his pursuit is at first checked. If beaten by the capture of the work, his retreat is cut off.

The pursuit after the victory was rapid and complete. Evidently, too, the Danes fought in two bodies. It is most improbable they entrenched either. Had they done so they could not have afforded each other any mutual support whatever. They would in that case have merely shut themselves in as two isolated fractions ; one of which, attacked partially, might have been 'held,' while the other, attacked vigorously, was defeated. They *may* have fought in hill-forts ; but it is more likely they fought fairly and bravely in the open.

Furthermore, not only is the western 'Ashdown' very far from their port of debarkation, but to reach it they must have passed by Wantage, where presumably Alfred would be collecting some of his forces, and be exposed to an attack in rear after they had passed. The sword found (with two skeletons) at Hagley Wood, and which, from its size (2 feet 11 inches by 2 feet) seems to be Saxon, is, therefore no evidence that here the great fight was fought. But there is one clue to this mystery. Asser, in his account already quoted, refers to the single thorn-tree * that stood on the hard-fought field. And curiously enough Compton, one of the ancient Hundreds of Berkshire, is named in 'Domesday' as that of Nachededorne—that is, the Hundred of the Naked-thorn. Unless this tree were well known, it is scarcely likely that it would have been selected as a title ;

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* 'Unica spinosa arbor, brevis ad modum.'

and seeing that it was afterwards divided* between Faircross and Compton, and that in the survey the manors of *Contone* and *Assedone* are mentioned as part of the now extinct hundred, there seems at least sufficient evidence to connect this district and modern Compton with the above places. There was a church built by Cnut at Nachededorne in commemoration of the battle, so Robert of Gloucester says, and that at Ilsley may now occupy the site of this very church of which ' Radulphus was Presbyter.'

Lastly, there are the traces of entrenchments on Lowbury Hill, and the name applied to 'King's Standing Hill,' and the tradition that the latter took its name from Ethelred the King ; and it is a reasonable view to take that the Danes, burning the village at Compton and there about, had pushed forward to use the Upper Icknield way, when the presence of the Saxons from Wallingford, or possibly Wantage, forced them to halt for battle. They may have refortified Lowbury, but for what purpose it is difficult to see. From Asser's own account, they formed in two bodies, and that implies freedom of movement, which fortifications can never give.

To sum up, therefore, Æscesdun seems to have been fought either in front of Compton on the Lowbury spurs, or in front of Nachededorne on the Ilsley Downs. Either would suit the requirements of the case, and the latter locality has the advantage of place-names.

Be this as it may, the Danes were checked at Ashdown by Alfred's skill ; and when Ethelred died from wounds received in battle against the national foe, in the same year, Alfred became King. His early days of government were those of trouble and danger. At a fight near ' Abendun,' in 871, the Saxons had to sue for terms, and the following year the enemy again wintered in Reading ; but Alfred gave them no peace until Ivar

* Lysons.

their chief capitulated, and Berkshire was for a brief while at rest.

But reverses poured in, and again Alfred fled, though it was but for a short time. 'The Danish host suddenly rode through the West-Saxons' land, and there sat down, and muckle of their folk over the sea they drove, and of the others the most deal they rode over.' This sudden irruption scattered what forces there were ; but secretly forming a fresh army, Alfred, in 878, when the Danes had been lulled into false security, assembled it at Ecbyrhtestane, or Brightrichestone (Brixton in Wiltshire), and marched thirty-five miles to a place called Æglea or Iglea, whence he moved to attack the enemy.

This brought on the battle of Ethandûn, in which the Danes were decisively defeated, and the remnants of the defeated army took refuge in a fortified camp. As the chronicle says, 'He fared one night from the Wick to Æglea, and after that one night to Ethandûn, and there fought with all the host, and put them to flight, and rode after them to their work, and there sat fourteen nights.'

The site of this battle was on the borders of the county, if not in it. The far end of the Berkshire Hills is not very distant from Eddington near Westbury in Wiltshire, where the battle seems to have been fought.*

It is true that 'Iglea' may be traced in the Hundred of 'Eglei,' now Kintbury Eagle, and that the names Eddington and Daneford, or Denford, which are not far north of Kintbury, might be thought to apply to the second great fight. But the Berkshire Eddington seems too far from Brixton, and too far south to answer the requirements of the case.

So by this second great fight in the Berkshire neighbourhood, and practically at the western end, this time, of the Berkshire Hills, Alfred of Wantage again reduced the Danes to submission. Guthorm, their King, became a Christian, and as Guthorm-Æthelstan was still allowed to

* E. A. Freeman.

keep East Anglia and North-east Mercia ; while Alfred
regained that portion of the Mercian kingdom which had
been part of Wessex in the seventh and eighth centuries.

The Danes settled, and Alfred strengthened and restored
his kingdom, torn and desolated by so many struggles.
Churches and learning grew, schools were established, and
books written; an army and a permanent navy were formed ;
the laws of past rulers were collected, codified, and added
to ; and, if it had not been already done by Ina of Wessex,
the empire was now divided into shires. And so by this
time, at any rate, Berroc scyre came to be, whether from
the tradition of the old Bibroci who occupied its western
portion, or from the Berroc (box), or the Beorce (beech),
which then flourished in its forests, is immaterial. But in
maps of no very distant date Berruc Wood is shown around
Wokingham, and lives as modern ' Bearwood.'*

This division of the country into manageable fractions
was based apparently on a system of judicature. Each
shire at first seems to have been divided into thirds, or
trythings, a system surviving partially ' in the *ridings* of
Yorkshire, the *laths* of Kent, and the *three parts* of Lincoln-
shire.' Each trything again was divided into *hundreds*, or
wapentakes ; and these again into tythings, or dwellings of
ten householders. Each of these was responsible for the
good order of his house, both to the King and to the other
members of the tything. Lastly, each shire was governed
by an earl, who was called the *shire-rieve*, whence is derived
the term sheriff.

So the country was ruled by the West Saxons until
Ethelred II. ascended the throne, and then Sweyn of
Denmark ravaged the country, and burnt Reading, Wal-

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* Also called by old Latin writers ' Bercheria,' and spelt also
Borres-cyre, Berro-cire, Baroc-scire. Asser considers it derived from
the boxwood-tree, which are not, now at least, common. Another
suggestion is, that it arose from the ' Bare Oak ' in Windsor Forest,
where the Druids met in solemn conclave ; but this seems mythical.

lingford, and Cholsey in 1006. Thence the Danes moved by Ashdown to Cuckhamsley; for there was a tradition that those who did so would never again see the sea. During this time Saxon Nachededorne, near Compton village, must again have been destroyed. 'They went,' says Richard of Gloucester,

> ' Mest wo hü dude in Barcssyre and up Assesdoune,
> And so about Quychelmesley, and so in mony toune ;'

and it is also said defeated the Saxons in a skirmish near the Kennet, probably on their way back to Reading. Then he granted a truce for £3,600, and from this and other similar demands arose the tax of 'Danegelt,' which continued to be levied long after the cause for it had ceased.[*] But the truce was soon broken, and more burning and destroying was followed by reprisals. Again the ravaging hordes passed with desolation over Wallingford, Abingdon, and Oxford, to return by way of Dorchester, Bensington, and Staines, until, in 1013, Sweyn assumed the sovereignty over England, and Ethelred fled to Normandy.

The history of the county throughout the Danish and late Saxon rule, and up to the Norman Conquest, does not present many features of interest.

After Ethelred's death the kingdom was divided; Edmund Ironside taking the Southern Provinces, and the Danes those of Mercia, East Anglia and Northumbria. But when the Saxon King also passed away, the whole territory was merged in the kingdom of Cnut the Dane. After his decease it became the appanage of his son Hardicnut, during his brother Harold's reign; and finally, in the time of the Confessor, Sweyn, Godwin's son, governed Oxford, Berks, Gloucester, Somerset, and Hereford until, after his outlawry, it passed to his brother Harold the Earl.

Then, on Edward's death, the last Saxon Earl of Wessex,

[*] Hume.

and therefore of Berkshire, became Harold the King ; and, slain by an arrow on the bloody field of Senlac, on the 14th October, 1066, he was buried in the Abbey Church of Waltham, and with him passed away the pure Saxon line of sovereigns of England for ever.

No wave of invasion has left a stronger mark upon the nation than that of the Saxons. In name terminations, as Chester, caster, cester, ceaster, from castrum, a fortress; as clere, a hill, in Highclere, Burghclere, Kingsclere ; in ham, an enclosure ; in holt, a copse ; in hurst, a wood ; in ing, belonging to ; in low or hloew, a grave-mound ; in lich, a field of the dead ; in stead or stede, a place ; in ton or tun, a fenced place ; in dun or dune, a hill ; in burn or bourne, a brook ; and in numerous other cases can modern place-names be traced to a Saxon source. Henley finds an origin in Hen-llys, the old palace. Wallingford may be the Wealas-ing-ford, that is, the old fordway of the British or Welsh ; or it may have been derived from the Wallingas-ford, or ford of the Welshmen. The ' slad ' at Compton is the valley between the hills. Their land-divisions of *mark*, or a portion set aside for a community of freemen ; of *seir*, the union of two marks, or of a portion shorn from the greater kingdom ; *gafol*, rent of land, were methodical, and the basis of land division now.

Their power extended over the whole area they conquered, because they were colonists as well as settlers ; and, like other military colonists, they drove back, destroyed, or more or less enslaved, the populations with whom they came in contact. Their organization was that of the commune, as can be traced in place-names, where the prefix denotes the family name of the first Saxon settlers. Thus the Farringas founded Farringdon ; the Abbas, Abbadon or Abingdon ; the Radingas, Reading, and so on ; and with these more numerous and more widely-spread settlements, the intercommunication between them multiplied also. As agriculture increased the cultivation extended farther into

the valleys and encroached on the primeval woods. With their destruction came less rainfall, and less morass. So that roadways of Saxondom run pretty much as they do now. They did not make solid roads, or improve and mend aboriginal ones, as their immediate predecessors had done ; but they made new ones, and widened or made more definite the old. The spread of Christianity and the building of churches, though large numbers of them were probably at first either partially or entirely constructed of wood, still further induced the opening up of the country and the formation of village communities. If the Roman rule had been one of municipalities, and of imperial centralization, that of the Saxon had been agrarian and domestic. The former 'built and fortified ; the latter appropriated and enclosed.'*

Thus some of the land in the valley of the Ock, which had once been marshy, as the name Moreton (Moor-town), and Cholsey (Ceol's Isle) along the stream or bourne which rises near Hagbourne (the *haig* or hedged enclosure by the *bourne* or brook) would imply, now contained villages, united by a branch road from Wallingford to the Icknield way. Wallingford was then, and remained until the fifteenth century, the principal passage of the Thames, with fords at Boxford and Culham. The Streatley passage seems to have been abandoned, as the Roman road had been ; and it is also likely that the Roman Bridge at Pontes had never been rebuilt, but that the ford at old Windsor took its place.

Again, in the Kennet Valley along its northern bank, the line of traffic partially deserted the Bucklebury Hills, and united Reading with Newbury and Hungerford by the road which joined the Saxon Churches of Theale, Shaw, and Avington. Elsewhere, too, the communications began to assume their modern directions and positions ; and the ancient Icknield way and Ridgeway, and many another

* Godwin.

ancient route, in their turn fell into disuse, and became grass-grown, as the Roman military highways had done before them. Bridges still were rare.

National laws and ecclesiastical regulations followed in due course from Ethelbert to Cnut, and written charters from Ethelbert to the Conquest.

A charter of 944 mentions a Beaver Island in the Kennet, which points to a tradition of the former existence of that animal there. Alfred left the three estates of Wantage, Ethendun (Yattendon), and Lambourne to his wife, and the latter is mentioned as a royal demesne of the Confessor's. In the Saxon Chronicle of 821, Leckhampstead, Boxford, Welford, Poughley, Trinley, Wickham and Speen are of sufficient importance even then to be mentioned ; and when the Saxon Thane Ulward held Newbury as the Ulward's town, which the Normans afterwards called Uluritone, it numbered fifty-one houses, while Reading had but twenty-nine.

The churches, of which many at first were probably of wood, and were destroyed by the Danes, numbered 1,700 in the time of the Conquest ; but many of these may have been built by Cnut and his successors. The stone churches were distinguished by ' long and short masonry,' the absence of buttresses, semicircular and triangular arches, rude balusters, hammer dressings, and unchiselled sculptures. The tower of Cholsey, the tower and chancel-arch of Wickham, show the traces of the work of this period.

In Benson Church is a clumsy pillar that encloses a part of the Saxon edifice, and Upton and Aston are both by tradition said to have been churches in which Alfred worshipped. In the latter he returned thanks after Æscesdun for his wonderful victory. Religious establishments are said to have existed at Bromhill, and at Bradfield, where Ina founded one, and bestowed it on the Abbey of Abingdon.

At Cholsey, in 986, Ethelred founded a monastery in expiation of the murder of Edward the Martyr, which the Danes burnt ; and the lands went afterwards to the great Abbey at Reading, near the site of which Elfrida in 986 also founded a house of Benedictine nuns, as an atonement for the same offence. This also was destroyed during the Danish invasion of 1006.*

Sonning was the site of a Saxon Bishopric, of which Athelstan, Odo, Osulf, Alfstan, Algar, Syeric, Alfric, Brightwold, Hereman, Oswald and Roger, were Bishops, which was afterwards united to that of Sherborne, whither the headquarters of the see were transferred in the reign of Edward.

The greatest Saxon religious establishment in Berkshire was the Abbey of Abingdon. It was founded by Cissa, Viceroy of Centwine, who in 675 granted a tract of land to Heane, his nephew, who became the first prior over the twelve monks of the Abbey erected in honour of the Virgin. This story is somewhat corroborated by another, which states that one 'Eanus, a noble Saxon, began to build a little monastery by the permission of Cissa at Bagley Wood or Chisewel.' A sister of Heane's also dedicated a nunnery here to St. Helen, whence it took the name of 'Helenstow ;' and when this, later on, was removed to Witham, its site became the manor of 'St. Elen's,' which eventually passed to the fraternity of the Holy Cross, and to the Christ's Hospital Charity of Abingdon. The nuns of St. Helen's were of a very strict and retiring disposition, for even at Witham they would not rest, but deserted it during the wars of Offa and Cynewulf, because a Saxon castle and its garrison were established there. Tradition and legend have, of course, gathered round the early history of the great Abbey, and monkish chroniclers were not unwilling to adopt them. Some of them assert that its

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* The ancient barn at Cholsey, measuring 64 feet by 303 feet, dates from A.D. 1101, and belonged to the Abbots of Reading.

name is derived from that of an Irish monk Abennus, who received from the King of Britain the greater part of Berks. Others stated, so Leland says, that it was begun near Bagwell Wood, in the parish of Cumnor. A mysterious reverence was attributed to the place. It had been the site of a place of British worship. It had been the chosen spot where Christianity had first taken root in that district. A cross made ' of the nails of the Cross, which struck dead all who forswore themselves on it,' had been found there. 'At the time when the wicked Pagan, Hengist, basely murdered 460 noblemen and barons at Stonehengist or Stonehenge, *Aben,* a nobleman's son, escaped into a wood on the south side of Oxfordshire, where, leading a most holy life, the inhabitants flocked to him to hear the Word of God, and built him a dwelling-house and a chapel in honour of the Holy Virgin ; but he, disliking their resort, stole away to Ireland, and from him the place where he dwelt is called Abingdon.' The effort to give the Church's holding over the place extreme antiquity is evident, but there is no proof that British Christianity penetrated so far as this, even though the tradition runs that on digging the foundations at Abingdon, images and crosses of that distant period were found.

There is little doubt, however, that Cissa founded it, and that Ceadwalla not only confirmed the latter's gift, but probably gave the royal city, known as Seovocesham, to the new monastery, and changed its name to Abbenden, the Abbey Hill.

Cissa himself, according to Leland, was buried in the Abbey, 'but the very place and tomb of his burial is never known, syns the Danes defaced Abingdon.'

Ceadwalla further endowed it, in 686, with ' Uicham cum suis campis ' on the Roman road, near Speen ; and King Ina, in 699, added to it 273 hides of land in ' Bradfield, Bestleford, Streatley, and Ermondslea,' * and also the manor of Goosey.

* Appleton.

In 755 King Cynewulf granted to his sisters the vill of Culham, which they desired to present to the Abbey, in which they intended to be buried. Shortly afterwards Pope Leo III. placed Culham Church under the absolute jurisdiction of the abbot. The 'Charter of Easton,' in 801, contains a gift by Brihtric of the manor of Aston to Lulla the Saxon, whose name is preserved in 'Lollendon,' and who, in his turn, says, 'All my rights that I had in Aston I give to St. Mary of Abingdon.'

Ethelwolf, about 850, gave the tithes to the churches free of tax, which made 'general what had before been the fruit of individual piety ;' and Lyford was held by a charter of 944, together with thirteen hides of land in Hennerithe (East Hendred), Bray, and elsewhere, the gifts of Edmund, Eadgar, and Cnut.

The building was growing in size as well as wealth. 'There were twelve mansions about this monastery at first, and as many chapels, inhabited by twelve monks without any cloister, but shut in with a high wall ; none being allowed to go out without great necessity and the abbot's leave. No woman ever entered the same, and none dwelt there but the twelve monks and the abbot. They wore black habits, and lay on sackcloth, never eating flesh unless in dangerous sickness.'*

So the church waxed strong and rich, and the Danes, thinking so, took it and destroyed it. Its first church, 120 feet long, and with apsidal ends, was probably of wood, and was certainly burnt. And this notwithstanding that an image took stones out of the wall and pelted the Danes therewith. But it availed nothing. The hard-hitting heathen plundered it and went their way, to be defeated afterwards by the King, who then sought payment for his aid from the Abbey monks. The looted monastery had little to give, and that little the King wanted, but did not get. So he took from them the governance of the town and

* Dugdale's ' Monasticon.'

many of their estates as compensation for having vanquished their spoilers, and was compared to Judas promptly.

The manor of Aston seems to have left them, and did not come back until after the death of Ælfrith, Queen to Eadgar, to whom the King had granted it and its disposal. But it rose slowly from its ashes, and Hugh Capet of France helped it indirectly in 939, for he wanted to marry Ethilda, the sister of Athelstan, and so sent valuable presents, which found their way to Abingdon. Such valuables as 'a thorn and part of a nail from our Lord's crown and cross; the standard of St. Maurice, commander of the Theban legion and martyr; and a finger of St. Dionysius, the martyr,' would be attractions to the devout pilgrim, doubtless. It was a fitful gleam of prosperity, however, for after the death of Edmund I. the monastery was almost deserted, and its lands taken from it. The county was much disturbed during these days, and the woodlands were the resorts of all the loose elements of a disordered society. In Bagley Wood, north of Abingdon, St. Edmund of Abingdon was himself attacked, but proving his real poverty, escaped. Other notables were not so fortunate. 'One Blake hung upon an oak, in the way to Abingdon, beyond the half-way gate. This traitor betrayed three Christian kings, and would have betrayed the fourth; upon which he was hanged within two days after his design was discovered, upon the said oak, which is thus called " Blake's Oak." '* Whether the Danes had again ravaged it or not, is not stated; perhaps there was nothing, except relics they did not value, worth the stealing.

Eadred, Alfred's grandson, whom the *Witan* chose as king, had fallen under the monkish influence of Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, as somewhat similarly did Henry II. later on. The prelate was shrewd enough to see that the existing monasticism had become weakened by the disorders of the time, and that unless reformed and hardened

* Hearne.

it must give way. Ethelwold, pupil of Bishop Alphege of Winchester, and Oswald, shared Dunstan's views. They recognised the force of the principle of celibacy, as applied to the clergy, which the Benedictines had introduced into Italy, and they determined to apply it here. So to the re-endowed and now Benedictine Abbey of Abingdon was appointed Ethelwold, the Glastonbury monk, at the instance of Queen Edgiva. Dunstan assisted at its re-consecration ; and its two first bells were the gifts of him and of the new abbot, and were made by their own hands.

Eadred, in 949, gave eighteen manses or hides of land at Welleford (Welford), in exchange for lands in Cornwall ; and this gift was, by the King's consent, bestowed on Abingdon. In 955 Eadwig (Edwy), granted Ferry Hinksey and South Hinksey to it by charter ; and in 956 gave twenty-two hides, at Welyford (Welford) to Eadric, who transferred it to the Abbey. This same parish contains the ten hides of land at Easton, given by Eadgar to his Queen Ælfrith (Elfrida), daughter of Ordgar, Ealdorman of Devon. She it was whose beauty led to the deceit practised by the King's friend, Æthelwold, when sent to woo the Earl's daughter for his sovereign, and which resulted in his being his own wooer, and marrying her. But Eadgar saw her later, and Ælfrith herself, using all her charms to fascinate the King, induced him to slay her husband by treachery, and make her Queen. This last charter to her, in which he speaks of her in the most affectionate terms, and where he himself styles himself 'Totius Albionis insulæ archous,' is signed by Dunstan, ' 11 bishops, 5 abbots, 5 duces, and 25 ministers or priests ;' but she nevertheless caused the death of this husband's son, King Edward the Martyr, by ordering him to be stabbed when drinking his stirrup-cup after hunting at Corfe Castle, and then made tardy expiation for her crimes by founding the monasteries of Wherwhell and Amesbury.

Dunstan was an energetic man. He got from Edwy,

who succeeded Eadred, the privilege for the Abbey to elect
its own abbot, and this and other advantages Eadgar con-
firmed.   He commenced the new church.   He sent Osgar,
the monk, to learn singing, and to improve the service, and
gave cups of gold and silver for the altar.   Abbot Ordgar
saw the completion of the church, which soon was rich in
manors and relics.   The Lady Eadfleda gave lands in
Winkfield and Wickham, and reliquaries, and cups, and
vestments in 1015.   Cnut himself had a casket made to
contain the relics of St. Vincent of Spain ; and Athelwin
gave another with relics collected by himself.   Remains of
Edward, 'King and Martyr,' were also brought there ; so
that Abbot Seward may be excused for wishing, as he did,
to improve the beauty of so rich a church.   But sainted
Ethelwold appeared to him in a dream, and told him to
turn his attention to the poor.   Athelstan, Spearhavoc,
and Ordric followed in the abbacy in due course, with the
usual additions of land, such as that at Lewknor, 'to pro-
vide more liberally for the maintenance' of the monks, and
their privileges during their tenure of office; but only Ordric
did any special work, and he, by improving the navigation
of the river by a new cut, gained for the Abbey cellarer a
toll of one hundred herrings for every boat that passed.   Last
of all, the Confessor bestowed on it the Hundred of Horner.

   Dugdale says that so rich was it, that at one time all the
land from Eynsham to Dorchester was in the Abbey's
holding, and it ranked almost with that great Abbey of
Glastonbury, of which Dunstan of Canterbury was the
head.

   But the reign of Saxon priests at Abingdon drew to an
end.   Aldred was the last, and he boldly withstood William
of Normandy, only to find a prison first at Wallingford, and
then with Bishop Walkelin of Winchester.*

   In earlier days the Wessex Saxons had rarely cremated
their dead, but had buried them in deep graves, over which

* Godwin.

a huge mound or *hlœwe* was raised, as in the case of the barrow at Taplow, on the borders of Berks. They were interred in any place rendered holy by being used for the funeral rites; but it was not until 742 that Cuthbert of Canterbury introduced the practice of interment in church-yards. A Saxon grave may be distinguished from those of other races by the character of the urns found in it, as at Long Wittenham and near Crux Easton Rectory, and by the presence of the iron sword, the spear, and the sceax. From this latter, the short knife, came the Saxon name. Such knives, with the iron umbo of a shield, were found in the 'cross barrow,' Compton; iron spear-heads at Lowbury; iron arrow-heads at the Churn Barrows; and an iron axe, somewhat of the 'Francisca' pattern, was found at Bède Farm, and may be either late Saxon or early Norman.* The barrows also frequently contained wooden bronze-cased buckets, glass drinking-vessels of strange form, and wooden shields with iron bosses or umbos, and the dresses and sword-belts were fastened with clasps of gold, bronze, or gilt metal. Cemeteries of the West Saxons have been examined near Abingdon, Fulford (with old Roman interments), Blewbury, Cookham, Long Wittenham, Milton, and Streatley; and Saxon skeletons are numerous in the 'holy place' of Kintbury. When Athelstan reigned, in 931, he granted to a certain Wulfgar, a thegn of Inkpen and Collingbourn, lands at Hamme; and it is possible that the monastery said to have existed there may have owed its endowment to him, for his name appears in a will bequeathing 'three parts of all the produce of his land at Inkpen to God's servants at Kintbury; to the holy place at Kintbury; to the servants of God where my body rests; for my soul, and for my father's, and for my grandfather's; for Wulfgar's soul who gives it, and for Wulfric's, and for

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* A somewhat similar axe from the field of 'Battle' at Hastings is in the possession of Dr. Stevens, of Reading.

Wulfhere's, who first acquired it.'* This ancient cemetery has been discovered and carefully examined by Mr. Walter Money, F.S.A., and is situated a short distance east of the present church.† A number of Saxon coins were found here in 1762; and coins of the same Athelstan, with Beornwald as moneyer, have been dug up at Wallingford.

But Saxon barrows of pre-Christian days are rare in this district, and the huge mound on the Ridgeway known as Scutchamore, or Cuckhamsley‡ Knob, is supposed to be rather a boundary mark than of sepulchral character. It was once more conical than barrows usually are, and in 1850 was about 18 feet high and 412 feet round, with a ditch 35 feet wide. Nothing was found within it, and it seemed to have been ' formed from the parings of turf cut from the hill on which it stands.' In the Saxon Chronicles of A.D. 648, it is stated that Kenwal, King of Wessex, gave his nephew Cuthred, son of Cwichelm, 3,000 hides of land ' be Æscesdune,' amounting, so says William of Malmesbury, to nearly one-third of his kingdom. Now Cwichelm himself was baptized at Dorchester in A.D. 636, and died that year, so it is difficult to see what this non-sepulchral mound had to do with him ; but it has been suggested that it is none the less the boundary mark of Kenwal's gift, and that as the grant was possibly made to Cwichelm originally, the mound, or Cwichelms-hlæwe, bore the name of the father rather than the son.§

The Danes left fewer traces on the land than their immediate predecessors. They occupied at first the eastern counties and great river lines chiefly, and it is in these directions that their influence was most strongly felt. Like

* N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 76.

† The suggestion that the holy place might be at Avington, on the north bank of the Kennet, seems to have little foundation.

‡ Also spelt Cuchmslow, Scuchmslow, and Curchelmslawe.

§ There is also a ridge near here spelt Cheeseridge, but locally, and therefore correctly, pronounced *Cush*-ridge. This may be a modification of Cuthred's ridge (Hundred of Compton).

the Early Saxons their career had been one of ravage and destruction, and the ruin of older things had followed in their steps. Save in a few place-names, such as Thorpe, near Chertsey, Marlow and Danesfield, near Hurley, and Danespit and Danespare on the Ashdown Hills, their mark on the Berkshire district is very faint. They do not seem to have penetrated up the Thames much farther than Wallingford, though they extended their ravages inland for some distance from the banks of the river.

Of their small circular camps there are no undoubted specimens, and even that at Reading has now been swept away, while the churches that were erected during the reign of the Danish kings were practically Saxon. Though they had burnt Wallingford in 1006, they settled there; but nothing is left to show that it was once a Danish town. They were luxurious people, these Danes, for they 'combed their hair once a day, bathed once a week, and changed their garments frequently;' and if they left no lasting trace on the surface of the land, they did on the peoples they overran, conquered, and finally settled side by side with. The Danish blood gave a fresh impetus to the decaying Saxon life, and from its infusion into it sprang the Englishman. The Dane destroyed as the Saxon did, but did not so rapidly colonize and thereby maintain so lasting a hold. If the Saxons absorbed the Celt and Romano-Briton, or what was left of them, the Dane, on the other hand, was absorbed by them; and when the stronger stock that descended from this union was again invaded and conquered by yet another race of Teutonic origin, though further removed from the parent stem than the earlier waves of conquest, the new-comer, the Norman,* a descendant of Northern Vikings, was soon melted down and disappeared in the English race.

So for good reasons or for bad reasons the invasion of William the Norman swept over the land. This wave there-

* The term first appeared in 895.

fore, alternating like the previous ones, came practically from the south. The coincidence is curious. Celt, Roman, and Norman seem to have advanced towards the North, while Palæolithic man, the Belgæ and the Saxon-Dane marched towards the west.

It must be borne in mind that the possibility of such an irruption had been foreseen, and that William had many actually Norman-French, as well as English, friends in England. This can alone account for the comparatively ready submission of the land to the new-comers. Except at Senlac, there was no real fighting.

The Conqueror, after taking Dover and moving round the eastern edge of the Andreadsweald, was checked at Southwark, and passed burning and plundering, as his forerunners had done, through Surrey, Hants, and Berks, along the south bank of the Thames to Wallingford, where Wigod the Saxon surrendered to the Norman, and became the King's man. He had been an ally of his before, and offered no objection therefore to the marriage of his daughter and heiress, Algitha, with Robert d'Oyley ; and so the keep of a Norman castle of stone soon overawed the land, and replaced the earthworks and stockading of the Saxon fortress. Passing by the future stronghold, William crossed the Thames at Wallingford and seized London.

Like all great military nations, the Normans had a keen eye for ground. The possible Celtic or British *Gualhen-ford*, or old fort by the ford, had become Romanized, had changed to Saxon *Wallingas-ford*, and so to *Walling-ford ;* and its fortress, covering a chief point of passage of the great western road over the Thames, altered with its name. The irregular British earthwork had changed to rectangular Roman, and then, improved by Saxon, had given way to stone. Similarly the hill at Windsor, commanding the valley of the Thames farther down, was seized upon by William as a suitable strategic site for a

Norman tower ; others were erected at the important strategical points of Reading and Newbury later on.

Thus the new invaders, like the old, held those places which commanded the principal arteries of communication. For the rule of the Barons was one of violence and repression. 'Domesday Book,' that marvellous record of the extent and value of all land and property throughout the realm, commenced in 1083, and ratified by a council at Old Sarum in 1086, was a means of still further crushing out the individuality of the freeholders, who in the year of its completion were obliged to take an oath of fealty to William. One of its commissioners, or Royal Justiciaries, for the Midland counties was Adam, the brother of Eudo Dapifer, the King's steward, who had two hides of land at Windsor. The survey produced by the land-tax as much as £500,000 of revenue, a rich prize in those days.

Confiscation now was easy, and revolt or insubordination met with organized and relentless punishment. The power of the Saxon Church was crushed ; its independence of Rome taken away ; its monasteries plundered. Norman priests and Italian prelates usurped the ecclesiastical rule, in which Pope Alexander willingly concurred. 'Contumely seems to have been wantonly added to oppression ; and the natives were universally reduced to such a state of meanness and poverty that the English name became a term of reproach, and several generations elapsed before one family of Saxon pedigree was raised to any considerable honours, or could so much as attain the rank of Baron of the realm.'*

But this last invasion was, unlike its forerunners, constructive and not destructive. It plundered and slew, but there it stopped. It annexed, but it did not demolish. It grafted itself on the ancient peoples, and improved them and bore fruit. The Normans, Saxons, Danes, and Belgæ came from the same racial stock, and though at times they

* Hume.

differed in faith, they insensibly became one. But the Roman was a foreigner in faith, in blood, and in character, and, as far as the whole nation was concerned, remained so during his entire occupation. So in India, the Mahometan and Hindu live side by side without much active antagonism, for they are but waves of immigration from the same district ; while the Englishman, like the Roman was, is a foreigner in faith and blood, never intermarries with the conquered, is neither absorbed by nor absorbs them, and is, and ever will be, alien. Still, the first result of the Norman invasion was naturally to produce antagonism on the part of the invaded ; and though William's rule at first seems to have been gentle, the natural confiscation of the property of the Saxon ruling classes eventually led to insurrections, and these to increasingly cruel reprisals. Many an Anglo-Saxon noble of what had once been Wessex, despairing of the fortunes of the country, fled to other lands ; and the Varingians of the Greek emperors at Constantinople were largely reinforced from Saxon Berkshire.

Still, while William reigned, he let no one rule but himself. His feudal followers he governed as sternly as the conquered Saxons. It was only after his death that the Barons broke loose from the restraint he imposed by his own strong rule. ' Stark he was,' says the English chronicler, ' to men that withstood him ; none dared resist his will. Earls that did aught against his bidding he cast into bonds ; Bishops he stripped of their bishopricks, and abbots of their Abbacies. But stern as his rule was, it gave peace to the land.'* With peace had come, too, an extension of ecclesiastical architecture. The Saxons had done little in this way, or at least their churches, if not of wood, had been small and plain, or rude. Lysons seem to be in doubt whether some of the so-called Norman fonts may not be of this time, and there is possibly Saxon work in the

* Proc. Berks Archæol. Soc.

tower of Wickham. Still, since there are fifty-six churches mentioned in 'Domesday' as existing in Berkshire at that date (1083-1086), a large number of these must have been of Saxon construction, though probably the whole were enlarged, altered, or improved by the new-comers, who left few unquestionable traces of the old work.

So that there are traces of Norman work in Norman fonts in the churches of Acrington, St. Nicholas at Abingdon, Aldermaston, Bisham (with the tombs of the Hobbies), Brightwalton, Bucklebury (with the tombs of the Winchcombes), Chaddleworth, Charney, Childrey, Cholsey, Clewer, Calmore, Enborne, Finchamstead, Farnborough, Hatford, Hinksey, Hurley, Kintbury, Purley, St. Lawrence at Reading, Sulhamstead-Abbots, Sutton Courtenay, Shalbourne, Shaw, Stanford Dingley, St. Leonard's at Wallingford, Thatcham, Woolhampton, and Welford ; and there are other indications at Woburn, Farringdon, Ashbury, Tidmarsh, and Letcombe Regis, in doorways and mouldings. The apsidal chancels of Padworth, Finchampstead, and Remenham, are also probably of Norman origin.

Thus the constructive Norman has left even more enduring traces than his predecessors. His churches were numerous and massive. If there are few Celtic and Roman words in Berkshire, and fewer Danish, Saxondom left its firm mark in numerous place-names which the Normans intensified. Where the Saxon family had created a village to which its name formed the prefix, as the Uffingas, the children of Offa, had made the *Uffingas-ton*, the Norman had, in many cases, boldly added to it his own patronymic distinctly as an affix. Thus Aston became *Aston-Ferrold ;* Kingston, *Kingston-Lisle,* and *Kingston-Bagpuze ;* Hampstead, *Hampstead-Norris ;* Sutton, *Sutton-Courtenay,* and so on. These names are few and far between, it is true, but they nevertheless represent the centres of Norman life. They were the seats of those who ruled and often ravaged the intervening lands ; and the numbers of the invaders were

as small in proportion to the great waves that had preceded them, as their discipline and armed strength were infinitely preponderating.

The Saxon occupied the ground broadcast by sheer weight of numbers, and there he settled and replenished the exhausted land. The Norman held the richest parts as his appanage; and the towers of the Norman keeps which arose at important strategical points where many roads met, as at Farringdon, Wallingford, Reading, and New-bury, were his sign-manual that he held the land, as he had gained it, by the sword.

CHAPTER V.

VERY soon after the Norman invasion arose the castles of
Wallingford and Windsor. Others were soon constructed
near the passage of the Kennet, at Reading, and where,
in place of Ulwardstown (or Uluritone) was springing up
Norman Newbury. During the Stephanic wars fortresses
were also built at Farringdon and Brightwell. Lastly, the
mansion of Donnington was eventually crenellated, and this
covered the new road along the northern bank of the
Kennet, as well as that to Oxford. Of these, Reading,
Brightwell, and Farringdon were speedily destroyed in, or
after, Stephen's reign ; Newbury died a natural death in
the Middle Ages ; Wallingford, Donnington, and Windsor
survived to take part in the Civil Wars ; and, after that,
Windsor alone remained.

   Of the history of the Castle of Newbury little is at pre-
sent recorded, though its duration was not very brief, and
it commanded the chief, if not the only, permanent passage
on the middle Kennet. It was erected by the Earl of
Perche, probably in the early part of the thirteenth cen-
tury ; was stormed by Stephen in 1154 ; was seized by
John Lackland ; was forfeited by the last Earl of Perche ;
was granted to Earl Pembroke ; passed through the hands
of the Montforts, Bigods, Mortimers, and Mohuns, and

then, by the female line, to the Montacutes, Beauchamps, and Richard Duke of York, who fell at the battle of Wakefield Green in 1460. In 1480, on its gate was spiked one of the quarters of Ramsay, a confederate of Cade's ; and after the fall of Warwick it once more became an appanage of the Crown. It probably stood on the canal wharf, east of the present bridge ; and from it the arms of the town— 'On a mount, a castle with three domed towers, on each a pennon with the legend "*Burgus Newberie*"'—were taken. When the building fell into disuse is uncertain ; but in the year 1627 the Corporation of Newbury, under a license of King Charles, purchased the Castle estate and converted the building into a workhouse, with John Emes as master. Finally it became the property of the River Kennet Navigation Company in 1723, who erected there the canal wharf.*

The history of the Castle at Reading, which covered the double passage of the Kennet and the Thames, is even more obscure. It is considered to have stood at the western end of the town, either where the old gaol was situated, at the foot of 'Castle Street,' or on the higher ground behind Coley Hill, where in Coates's map are shown fields marked as the 'old fortification,' and 'Mountfield.'† In the name of the street lives the only certain trace of the Norman keep of Stephen, which was destroyed in the following reign of Henry II.

Similarly the Castle at Farringdon, which covered the junction of five roads, and also the passage of the Thames at Radcot Bridge, was built by the Earl of Gloucester about 1142, suffered a short siege in the reign of Stephen, and was also probably demolished by Henry II., if not before ; and Brightwell, built during the same troubled time, on the heights west of Wallingford, so as to watch and overcome that fortress, shared the same fate.

That of Wallingford, which blocked the chief passage of

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* N. D. F. C. Proc.   † Coates.

the Thames where the great western road crossed it, has a more stirring story to tell.

It had been a fortress through all British time. The earthen camp of the Celts had been altered by the Romans, or replaced by a rectangular work, one side of which was washed by the Thames. In the ancient walls of the keep there seemed to have been Roman masonry, from the 'herring-bone' fashion in which the stones were laid ; but this is no evidence that it was ever a walled town, and the subterranean passages from the north side to the river, and from the south side also, though the masonry appears Roman, are of no further value than proving that there was a Roman station here. The Saxons apparently erected no castles of stone ; and Earl Wigod's house was probably, at most, a long, low, wooden building, while the earthen city wall was defended by stockades. It was left to the constructive Normans to erect the more permanent castle. After the revolt of Oxford, and its subsequent storm, D'Oyley of Wallingford was directed to fortify his town, and in it hence arose the Norman keep. ' Pro castello sunt viii. hagæ destructæ ;' and in 1071 the castle begun in 1067 was finished. In the former year a similar fortress was erected by D'Oyley at Oxford. Throughout the disturbed times of the Norman and Anglo-Norman kings, both took a larger share than almost any other towns in the continual strife of that period.

Ranulph de Blundeville, the Earl of Chester, held it in 1218, and built the Castle Hall ; and when he died, his heart was buried there, and his body in his town of Chester.

From him, in 1231, it went to the Earl of Cornwall, King of the Romans and King of Almain,* brother to Henry III., who held court there with royal hospitality, and in whose time large sums were spent upon it. He was not inaccessible to corruption, for certain Jews bribed him to pardon one of their number condemned to death at

* Spelt also Almayne ; he claimed the sovereignty of Germany also.

Reading; but, notwithstanding, the Jews of the realm were sold to the Earl by the King for the sum of 5,000 marks. On the Earl's death it passed to his son Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, who founded the Church of St. Nicholas in the Castle.

It took part in the troubles of the reign of Henry III. His weak and vacillating character had led to discontent on the part of the Barons, who, after the 'mad Parliament' of 1258, broke into open insurrection against both him and his brother, the Wallingford Earl.

After falling into the hands of the Barons, it was occupied in 1262 by Simon de Montfort, their leader, whose Countess for a time resided there. But on the breaking up of the conspiracy, owing chiefly to the desertion of Gloucester to the King's cause, De Montfort fled to France, and the Castle again had a royal garrison.

But Leicester returned again and attacked it;* and, though Henry once more submitted, it still remained with the royal party. The truce was of short duration, however, and after the battle of Lewes it received as prisoners the King, Richard of Cornwall, with his sons Prince Edward and Henry Almain; and here, when the rest were released, Edward was still kept in durance. Efforts were made to release him. The Queen secretly apprised Sir Warren de Basingbourne that the Castle was but weakly guarded, and he, advancing against it with 300 horse, after a brisk assault gained the outer works. But here they were checked. For the assailants were warned that if they wanted the Prince they should have him, but he should be sent to them bound from a mangonel. Shortly afterwards he was removed to Kenilworth, whence he escaped to join in the battle of Evesham, where Leicester was slain.

In due course Edward became the King, and his son, the first Prince of Wales, succeeded him. He had little of his father's energy or intellect. A victim to favourites, he

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* ' Hist. of Wallingford.'

gave to one of the haughtiest and worst, Piers de Gaveston, the Castle and Manor of Wallingford. Sir Piers had little tact, to say the very least. A tournament was held to inaugurate his appointment. At this he used a tongue so railing as to incense the Earls, his guests ; and one of them, never forgetting the insults of that time, ultimately took his life. To call the dark, sallow Earl of Pembroke 'Joseph the Jew ;' to address the fierce Earl of Warwick as 'the wild boar of the Ardennes ;' to touch the vanity of the Earl of Lancaster by calling him 'the stage-player,' was little calculated to bind these nobles to him. But he died as he had lived, in violence, in the Castle of that very Earl of Warwick whom he had insulted at Wallingford long years before.

And then Wallingford became the appanage of another favourite, Hugh Despencer ; and after his fall that of Isabella the Queen. Conspiracies were numerous for all sorts of causes. During one of these, set about to release all those who had been imprisoned when the King seized the estate of Alicia, widow of the Earl of Lancaster, for marrying another husband without his royal consent—a curious illustration of the extent of the feudal power—it was taken by the malcontents, but recaptured by Sir Richard d'Amoz, Lord of Bucknell and the King's steward. Meanwhile Isabella had fled to France, and found, in her turn, a favourite in Roger Mortimer. She returned ostensibly to destroy the power of Despencer, who was again in favour, and issued a manifesto from Wallingford offering a reward for his head.

On her favourite she bestowed the Castle, when the King had been taken prisoner to Kenilworth, and held a 'Royall Christmas' at the ancient town of Wallingford.

During the minority of Edward III. it had been in the hands of William de Mareschal by order of the late King ; but Isabella deprived him of it and gave it to Sweyn de Martel, to see it restored to him by her son, who, when he

became King, eventually presented it to his brother, John of Eltham, created Earl of Cornwall. Edward speedily checked the career of Mortimer, who was the first man hanged at Tyburn, and Isabella the Queen practically became a prisoner in Castle Rising in Norfolk.

Then grew up the connection between Wallingford and the Princes of Wales. For as the Earldom of Cornwall had, as far back as Fitzcount's time, been linked with the manors and Castle of Wallingford, so when in 1334, on the death of John of Eltham, the earldom was made a dukedom, an Act of Parliament of the next year enacted that the Duchy of Cornwall with the Castle and Honour of Wallingford should be 'settled on the eldest sons of the Kings of England in succession.' Thus the Black Prince, born at Woodstock, became Lord of Wallingford, and it remained an appanage of the Duchy until the reign of Henry VIII. On his death it passed to his son Richard ; and here, where she had long lived unmarried owing to the opposition of the King to her union with the Black Prince, resided his ladye-love, 'the fair maid of Kent ;' and here she, his widow, after nine years of mourning, died and was buried.

Richard II., after his farewell from his girl-Queen at Windsor in 1399, on his departure for Ireland, caused her to be removed to the 'stronger fortress of Wallingford,' a clear proof of the relative importance of the two places at that time. But in the August of that year he became a prisoner to Henry of Bolingbroke, and on his deposition his young wife took an active part in the effort to regain the throne for her husband. Her adventures are touching in the extreme. Hurried from place to place, she at length found herself at the head of an army at Sunninghill in Berkshire, and the Earls, her generals, had laid hands too on Windsor. But it availed nothing. The Earl of Kent deceived her with false hopes. ' So gladed he the Queen with lyes, and rod forth to Walynforth, and

from Walynforth to Abyngdon, warnyng alle men be the
weye that thei shuld make hem redy to help Kyng
Richard.' But Richard was still a captive, and was soon
to taste the bitterness of death. And Isabella of Valois,
herself taken prisoner, then but a child of thirteen years,
was held for the while in close restraint, and, mourning for
her husband, refused to be comforted.

Thus Henry of Bolingbroke reigned as the fourth of that
name, and probably did no more remarkable deed throughout
his reign than appoint 'nostre bien aimé escuier,' Thomas
Chaucer, to be Constable of Wallingford and High Sheriff
of Oxford and Berks. He was the son of the poet, and
a man of influence. Four times did he represent the town
in Parliament, and in 1414 was made Speaker of the House
of Commons. He received for his stewardship the sum of
£40 a year, with twenty marks additional, when, like another
Joseph, he was made chief butler to the King for life.

Henry V. bestowed the Castle and Honour on his Queen;
and his son, afterwards Henry VI., was entrusted to the care
of the Earl of Warwick to be taught and instructed in his
duties at 'Wallingford and Hertford in the summer, and
Windsor and Berkhampstead in the winter.'

Owen Tudor was transferred here from Newgate in
1438 to the custody of the Earl of Suffolk, who was after-
wards charged by the Commons with treachery, and with
having 'for his own defence furnished the Castle of
Wallingford with all warlike munition,' with the ultimate
object of handing it over to France. He fell a victim at
last to the popular fury, though there is no evidence of
such treachery on his part. His Duchess, Alice, at first a
Lancastrian, became Yorkist when the political tide turned,
and as Constable of the Castle received there the person of the
Duke of Exeter, a Lancastrian prisoner. She shortly after-
wards once more reverted to her first political attachment,
but again changing on the advent of the Yorkists to power,
she still retained her position as Castellaine, even when

Queen Margaret, her erstwhile patron, was prisoner within
its walls.

'Twenty-seven years before, Alice had, with all the
splendour which England could afford, accompanied her
husband to France to bring home Margaret, "in the flower
of youth and beauty's pride," as Queen to this country.
Then all was hope and happiness. But now this same
Margaret, a widow, childless, degraded from her regal
power, "broken with the storms of State," was a prisoner,
on the poor allowance of "five marks a week," in a fortress
which once had owned her sway.'

Berkshire seems to have been favourable to such changes
in belief, as Lady Suffolk showed. Between Alice Chaucer,
Duchess Dowager of Suffolk, and Simon Aleyn, Vicar of
Bray later on, there is not much to choose.

'Such many, now-a-dayes, who, though they cannot turn
the wind, will turn their mills, and set them so, that where-
soever it bloweth, their grist shall certainly be grinded.'*

Her son, John de la Pole, had intermarried with the
house of the White Rose, and became Constable in his
turn, and steward of the Honours of Wallingford and
St. Wallerie ; and was succeeded by Sir Richard Grey,
and then by Lord Lovell until his attainder for his share
in Bosworth fight, after which he had fled to Burgundy.

With Henry VII. the Suffolks again so trimmed their
sails as to obtain the King's favour, and, 'in consideration
of good and faithful service,' the Constableship of Walling-
ford. Supple dispositions the family must have had, both
mother and son ; and a ready adaptability to the varying
circumstances of the time. The Duke had got his son
made Earl of Lincoln by Edward IV.; had supported
Richard III. so far that he declared this same son the heir
to the throne, and endowed him with manors in Berkshire ;
yet, notwithstanding all this, he at the coronation of the
Earl of Richmond, as Henry VII., carried the royal sceptre.

* 'Fuller's Worthies.'

But the Earl of Lincoln lacked his father's pliability. He had not forgotten that he might have worn the crown but for Henry VII. So Lambert Simnel's attempt to dislodge the King gave him an opportunity which both he and Lovell seized. His persistency of purpose, so uncharacteristic of the family, did not succeed. He neglected the Suffolk traditions and could not trim. So he died in battle at Stoke, near Newark, in 1487, and Lovell fled, never more to be seen again alive in England. The Duke of Suffolk was still Constable of Wallingford for two years longer, and then resigned his office. Camden thinks he died of grief for the loss of his son, or rather 'for the ruin brought on the family by the Earl of Lincoln's death.' This latter is probable. It must have been very hard to see honours and possessions gained so ably, if nothing else, pass away to others, and that through breaking the family traditions, too ! Hence Edmund de la Pole, the Duke's remaining son, inherited the bare title; without the command at Wallingford, which his ancestors had so often held. Arthur, Prince of Wales, was Constable now, and on his investiture the King created Thomas Wriothesley, Esquire, 'Wallingford Pursuivant Extraordinary.' Among the commanders of the army of the King in the battle of Stoke, before referred to, had been a certain Sir William Norris. His grandson, Henry, became a favourite of Henry VIII., and was appointed Constable of Wallingford. But the friendship of the second Tudor was very insecure. On May Day, 1536, 'Anne Boleyn appeared for the last time in the pride and pomp of royalty'* at the jousts at Greenwich. Henry Norris of Wallingford took an active part in them, and performed his devoir well ; so well, it is said, that the Queen, either by accident or design, dropped her handkerchief from the balcony at the good knight's feet, and he, taking it up, touched his face with it, and returned it on his lance-point to the Queen. Whether there was cause or

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* Miss Strickland, 'Lives of the Queens of England,' vol. iv.

not for jealousy is doubtful, but Henry thought there was;
and so Norris was arrested for high treason. There is no
proof whatever of wrongdoing on his part; but even if he
had 'lived like a sinner he died like a saint.' All efforts to
make him incriminate Anne Boleyn, and save his own life
thereby, failed. No, he said; 'in his conscience he thought
the Queen was innocent of the things laid to her charge,
and he would die a thousand deaths rather than ruin
an innocent person.' And thinking thus, he died on
Tower Hill.

Sir Francis Knollys succeeded him in his office, and is
noteworthy as a just man who, though of strong Protestant
feelings, both behaved gently towards Mary Queen of
Scots when she was entrusted to his custody, and even
seems to have doubted the wisdom of detaining her at all.

But the value of Wallingford as a fortress was passing
away. Its old rival, Windsor, was growing up in its stead;
and, by the reign of Mary, much of it had become dilapi-
dated. It had not been a favourite residence of royalties
for some time. An inquisition, made in 1555, shows
that the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, with its tower,
was standing, but only as a mere shell, while the keep
was still entire. Much lead had been stripped from it for
making the water-pipes at Windsor; and squared stone
was removed both from Wallingford and Reading to build
the dwellings for the poor knights in the lower ward there.
In due course it passed through the hands of Sir Henry
Knollys, and his brother Sir William, Comptroller of the
Household, who finally became Viscount Wallingford,
and then Earl of Banbury. The race was an able one,
and many of its other scions represented the borough
in Parliament.* Lord Wallingford held the Constable-
ship of what had once been the Castle up to 1632,
when the Earl of Berkshire was elected 'High Steward of
the Borough of Wallingford,' and the term 'Constable'

* 'Hist. of Wallingford.'

finally ceased. But the old walls and earthworks had some military value even now, and when the Civil War broke out they were placed in a state of defence, and Colonel Blagge took command. After its surrender by him to Adjutant Arthur Evelyn, Governor for the Parliament, it was temporarily in the hands of Sir Edmund Dunch, through his relative Oliver Cromwell, and then became a state prison until 1652, when the Castle was ordered 'to be demolished and the works effectually slighted.'*

Little remains to show the magnitude and importance of the fortress. It was situated within the walls of the town at its north-east angle, thus overlooking the Thames. In Leland's time it seems to have had three 'dykes' or wet ditches, with two lines of embattled walls, and an inner keep or castle on a, probably artificial, mound, with other buildings also inside the second wall for domestic purposes. But not the least trace of any masonry has been discovered in the mound now. 'The huge mount stripped of all its former appendages, the few mouldering ruins, and the undulations and entrenchments, are all that remain to give an idea of the strength and extent of this once impregnable fortress. At no other stronghold could Cromwell's soldiers have done their work more thoroughly; its lofty towers, its buttresses and formidable walls, are gone, and its importance is no more; but its frame is indelibly marked on the page of history.'†

The Castle estate has fallen fortunately into worthy hands, and no better fate could be wished for this landmark of Berkshire history than to be in the possession of the historian of Wallingford.

Like Wallingford, the castle at Donnington, near Newbury, the date of erection of which is uncertain, was one of the few Berkshire fortresses that remained to take part in the later Civil Wars.

* Destroyed.   † 'Hist. of Wallingford.'

The manor is mentioned in ' Domesday ' as being held with Aneborne, Mortune, and also Deritone, in the hundred of Taceham. It passed principally through the hands of Gervas de Sanervilla, as *Dunintona* (1166) ; Gilbert Fitz-Reinfrid (1213); Richard de Copland (1237) ; Thomas de Abberbury, who held Dynynton in 1306-7 ; and Walter de ' Abbresbury ' (his brother).* He is stated by Grose to have given King Edward II. one hundred shillings for the Castle, which at that time was apparently merely an unfortified dwelling-house ; seeing that, in 1306, it was described simply as a capital messuage.† In 1385 it was in the hands of Sir Richard de Abberbury, guardian to Richard II. during his minority, who held a license to ' build anew and crenellate his Castle at Donyngton.'

It appears in these records also that in 1237 it was part of the Honour of Wallingford ; and that in 1243 the Bishop of Salisbury confirmed the appropriation of the tithes of Donnington to the priory of that town ; this explains the connection that is apparent between the two places.

A Richard de Abberbury is also mentioned, in 1433, in the list of Berkshire gentry ; and in 1414 it is recorded that he and his wife conveyed, through trustees and others, the Manor and Castle to Thomas Chaucer, for 1,000 marks of silver.‡ This Chaucer died in 1434, and it then passed to his daughter Alice, whose first husband, Sir John Phelipp, had died in 1415. Alice meanwhile had married the Earl of Salisbury, and on his death De la Pole, Earl of Suffolk. Thence her history merges into that of the Castle of Wallingford. As she had changed her husbands, so, as will be seen by reference, she altered with equal facility her political creed. A woman of much astuteness and little consistency was this fair dame, Knight of the Garter though she was, as her monument in Ewelme Church shows. Donnington passed to her eldest son John, who was followed by his son the

* Pipe Rolls.　　† Godwin.　　‡ ' N. D. F. C. Trans.,' vol. i.

Earl of Lincoln, and his brother Edmund de la Pole, on whose attainder the Castle reverted to the Crown. Henry VIII. granted it to the new Earl of Suffolk, Charles Brandon, who frequently resided there, and whose arms ornamented the glass of its windows. In 1535, he sold ' the Manor, Castles, and Lordships of Ewelme, Donyngton, Langley, West Bradley, West Compton, and Buckland, in the County of Berks, together with other Manors in the County of Oxford, the Manor-house and place of South-warke, commonly called the Duke of Suffolk's Place in the County of Surrey, with all Houses, etc., and the Park there, and also the offices of the High-Stewardship and Constable-ship of the Castle of Walyngford, Berks, in exchange for the reversion of the fee-simple of the Manors of Philbirdes (otherwise called Philbartes), Long Wittenham, Fiffed (Fifield), Eton, Frydysham (otherwise called Frilsford), and Gartford, in the Counties of Berks and Oxon, the reversion belonging to and the Manors of Southwolde, Dysenage, and others in the County of Suffolk.'

Thus the Castle again returned to the Crown, in whose hands it was neglected and fell into partial decay. None the less it was granted by Edward VI. to his sister Elizabeth, with some other manors, a part of the town of Newbury, and the manor of Hamsted-Marshall, etc.; and by her, during her reign, to the Earl of Nottingham. Among others, it came ' by settlement or mortgage ' to Peter Vanlore of Reading, of whom, now at least, his epitaph in Tilehurst Church speaks truly when it says :

> ' When thou hast read the name, " Here lies Vanlore,"
> Thou need'st no story to inform thee more.'

He is almost prophetic in his views of what posterity would say of this Utrecht merchant ; though his life was such as to merit the further information that it was

> ' The greatest part in one chaste wedlock spent ;
> Utrecht his cradle—Tylehurst loves his tomb.'

Of the rest of his life little is, perhaps advisedly, said.

Mr. Chamberlayne seems to have held it in 1623; and Mr. Packer is said by Symonds to have bought it of him. How the alienation from the Crown took place is not clear, but it is certain that it was the property of John Packer when it was garrisoned for the King during the Civil War. He did not fight there on one side or the other; but in the Long Parliament he was M.P. for Wallingford, another place that suffered in these troubled times; and when the war was over he built a mansion, now known as Donnington Castle House, from the ruins of the battered stronghold.

It is this very battering that has made the Castle of Donnington especially interesting.*

It is situated on the hill north-west of the village; and, at the time when Sir John Boys, shortly after the first battle of Newbury, was ordered to garrison and defend it with his own Foot and the Dragooners of Sir Robert Howard, it consisted of a rectangular stone building, ' with windows on all sides, very lightsome.'   The Castle had towers at the four angles, with possibly a small courtyard in the centre; and a square porch, further protected by two similar towers, stood on the east side.   It is this part that is now alone standing.   It is a question whether the earthworks afterwards made by Boys, and of which such definite traces still exist, were made while the walls were intact.   In one or two parts of the perimeter the earthen parapets are close to where the walls of the Castle stood, and it would be impossible to occupy the trenches while there was the certainty of masses of masonry being dislodged from the walls and battlements.   Sir John received weekly contributions 'from the hundreds of Kintbury Eagle, Fairecrosse, and Compton,' besides the neighbouring town of Newbury, which was most of the time at his mercy.

The first attack was made by Lieut.-General Middleton July 29th, 1644, who appeared before the place with about

* 'Battles of Newbury,' W. Money, F.S.A.

4,000 men. They assaulted some of the farm buildings in which Boys had placed some musketeers; and, on capturing them, sent a summons to surrender, which shows how the name of the King was used in such proclamations by his opponents. It ran as follows :

'SIR,

'I demand you to render me Donnington Castle for the use of the King and Parliament. If you please to entertain a present treaty, you shall have honourable terms. My desire to spare blood makes me propose this. I desire your answer.

'JOHN MIDDLETON.'

To this the commandant replied :

'SIR,

'I am instructed by His Majesty's express commands, and have not yet learned to obey any other than my Sovereign. To spare blood, do as you please; but myself, and those who are with me, are fully resolved to venture ours in maintaining what we are entrusted with, which is the answer of

'JOHN BOYS.'

'DONNINGTON CASTLE,
    July 31, 1644.'

A half-hearted assault was thereupon attempted, but it failed, with a loss of an officer and six men prisoners, and some killed. Sir John was more punctilious than his adversary about those 'which,' as he says, 'I cannot accommodate with Christian burial, as likewise many of your wounded men which I know not how to dispose of.' But Middleton, while expressing willingness to exchange the latter, conceived 'no inherent holinesse to be in any place or buriale, for all earth is fit for that use;' and leaving his men to their fate, he withdrew to join Essex in the west, while Governor Browne of Abingdon was left in charge of

the operations. Up to this time it appears that the building had suffered little real damage.

The second siege was commenced by a more strict blockade; and, reinforced by troops from Abingdon, Windsor, and Reading, together with some siege artillery, a heavy battery was formed 'at the foot of the hill towards Newbury,' whence a hot fire was kept up for twelve days, resulting in the destruction of three of the south towers and part of the curtain wall. There were but four pieces of cannon, according to Symonds, in the Castle, with 200 foot and 25 horses, at this time; while the siege battery fired about 500 rounds from 36, 12, and 6 pounder guns.

Again summoned to surrender, Boys replied that 'Neither your new addition of forces nor your high threatening language shall deter me or the rest of these honest men with me, from our loyalty to our sovereign; but we do resolve to maintain this place to the uttermost of our power; and for the matter of quarter, yours may expect the like on Wednesday, or sooner if you please. This is the answer of, sir, your servant,

'Jno. Boys.'

The obstinacy of the gallant Colonel brought Manchester himself from Reading, and a third summons having met with a further denial, an assault was proposed but negatived. The siege train was next transferred to the other side of the Castle, and placed in a battery on Snelsmore Common. Sapping was resorted to, and frequent sorties were made by the defenders, who were, as a rule, successful in these skirmishes; and finally, after seven days' further bombardment, during which they expended another 500 rounds, the siege was raised owing to the approach of the King, the guns being carried back to Reading. A garrison was, however, still left in Newbury, consisting of a regiment and two or three troops of horse;* and an officer of this

* 'Battles of Newbury,' p. 121.

force, writing to the *London Post* on the 23rd of October, 1644, states that the Castle 'is sore battered, and one breach in it that many may enter abreast.'

It is probable therefore that either during, or immediately after, this second siege, the field-works round the Castle were constructed. They consisted of an irregular bastioned-trace completely enclosing the remains of the stone building, the two largest bastions being on the northern and southern sides connected by a bent curtain. Nothing further occurred until the Parliamentarians re-entered Newbury after the second battle, and again surrounding the Castle, summoned it to surrender.

Sir John was accustomed to these requests from his enemies, and being threatened that if he did not comply 'they would not leave one stone upon another,' merely made answer that he was 'not bound to repair it.'* Though offered a capitulation by which he might depart with arms and ammunition, he refused, saying, 'Carry away the Castle walls themselves if you can; but with God's help, I am resolved to keep the ground they stand on till I have orders from the King, my master, to quit it, or will die upon the spot.'

Such obstinacy could only have one answer, an assault; and that failed. The spirit of the assailants seems to have become cowed. No further active measures were taken, but an attempt was made to poison the well, of which Sir John was informed by the commander of the investing force; and influence was even brought to bear on him through the Earl of Brentford, who, wounded on the 27th of October, was left at the Castle. But it was fruitless; so again, owing to the advance of the King from Oxford to Newbury, which he reached on the 9th of November, the siege was raised. The enemy still retained his hold of Newbury town, the northern side of which he had fortified. Right worthy was Colonel, now Sir John, Boys, of the knight-

* 'Battles of Newbury,' p. 145.

hood which the King had bestowed on him on the 22nd of October. His persistency of purpose not only held for the King, with even so weak a garrison, a fortress that was a constant menace to any but large forces of the Parliamentarians, but one which seemed to keep alive the Royalist spirit in the very heart of Berkshire.

The Puritans had, for a while, little stomach for further fighting. The Oxford army, drawn up in the fields between the Castle and Newbury, could not tempt those in the town to come forth to battle; on the 10th of November, 1644, therefore, all the stores that could be moved were taken away, leaving behind about eighteen field-pieces, and five or six larger guns in the works, well supplied with ammunition.

Soon after, Newbury was abandoned by the Parliament : and then it is reported that the Governor of Donnington, by way of reprisals, 'went to the mayor of the town and pulled him out of his house, which they plundered, and that they " abused his whole family most shamefully ;" and that they then went to the houses of eight or nine more chief persons in the place, dragged them also out of their dwellings, " abused their wives, children, and servants," and carried away great plunder ; and that the gentlemen themselves were actually conveyed prisoners to Donnington Castle.'

There was some excuse for it, as the town had refused to afford any succour at all to the garrison ; but it increased and embittered the feeling that separated the antagonists. These foraging-parties from Newbury, Wallingford, and Farringdon were exasperating to the Government, and likely to call attention to the injury these small garrisons were doing. So that Cromwell himself, after the fall of Basing, forcibly urged that the place should be reduced, and advised 'a strong quarter' to be made at Newbury. Thus began the last siege of Donnington, conducted by that same Captain Dalbier who had shared in the fighting and wounds at both the great battles in

Berkshire, and who had taken an active part in the assault of a similar stronghold on the south-western road, that of Basing House.

On the approach of Dalbier's force, consisting of two regiments of horse and three of foot, Sir John Boys fired 'Denington Toune' and 'other ajatient villages,' thus causing Dalbier to quarter his men in Newbury. The investment, notwithstanding Sir John's wise precautions, seems to have been fairly complete; but the country people still furnished the garrison with supplies, for the commandant 'Allways gave them a better price for there Comodities then they could have fownde att any of the Ajatiente Marketts, and truelly soe good A Justiser was Sr. John, y^t England had not A beter Regullated guarrisson, nor better beloved of the country then was this of Denington.'

Furthermore, since the north side of the hill upon which stood, where General Browne had erected the siege battery before, was weakest, as being on the end of the plateau, and the Castle could be more easily stormed from that approach, Boys erected there an outwork some 200 paces off, which he 'trenches and pallasads,' and made it bombproof. Reinforced also by 140 men from Winchester, and having sent away all the superfluous horses, he harassed the enemy by continual sorties, which were so successful that the Kentish regiment, which was most frequently attacked, became completely demoralized. The Parliamentary guards showed so little vigilance that these skirmishes, usually conducted after dark, as a rule surprised their various detachments; and whether at Woodhay or at Bolsome House, the Royalists were victorious. The death of Colonel Smith, a Royalist, goaded them to still further activity. Major Stuart, one of the Parliamentary commanders, who had himself killed the unfortunate Colonel, had gone to 'Knight's howsse of Greenhame to a greatte supper, to whose dafter he was a servante.' But civil war

and party hatreds respect no such ties, for the party of sixty men who had been despatched on their mission of revenge, ' came upon them soe sudently betwexte 7 and 8 of the cloke in the yeavinge in Marche, that they founed the doores oppen, and stuarte att super setting by the side of his m^{rs}.' It was the last ' beatinge uppe of quarters' of poor Stuart. ' The man would take no quarter,' and he died like a man, ' shotte dead in the place ' by the side of the woman he loved. Such reprisals were of course common. Houses in Bagnor were burnt by Boys because Dalbier's men had taken some of their adversaries prisoners while they were drinking there.

Later on, in April, the trenches were pushed closer, and this time at the foot of the ' Maypole' Hill, between the burnt ruins of Donnington village and the Castle out-buildings. Sir John vigorously disturbed the work of course by a dashing sortie, so that the assailants were strongly reinforced here; and a mortar battery was con-structed, which fired seventeen shells at the ' oold weake Rotten howse y^t wth this one dayes worke was well ney all shattered to peces.'*

The end was fast approaching. The previous bombard-ment had probably demolished all except the gate-house building, and this would be exposed on its southern side to the fire of the mortars. The barn and outbuildings had been again burnt. The ' granadoes made such work that the souldiers within knew not where to secure themselves, divers leaping over their works and craving quarter.'†

So the last summons was sent to the gallant old knight. He was told that Fairfax was victorious in the west, that Astley had been routed at Stow on the Wold, and that Chester had surrendered; hence, after stipulating that he should personally be permitted to corroborate the informa-tion by sending messengers to Oxford—a request that was

* Captain Knight ; ' Battles of Newbury,' p. 183.
† *Moderate Intelligencer ;* ' Battles of Newbury,' p. 159.

at once granted—a parley was held, and the terms of capitulation agreed to in a field south of the Castle, which still bears the name of 'Dalbier's Mead.' The defenders had won the respect of their adversaries by their fortitude and gallantry, and marched out with all the honours of war.

So fell the one fortress in Berkshire that had exercised a decided influence on the conduct of the war. With it the valley of the Thames, as far as Reading, and that of the Kennet beyond that town, were lost to the King. With the exception of Wallingford, no strong place in the county now held a Royal garrison.

What was left of Donnington was still further demolished after its fall. From its ruins a new building, 'The Castle House,' was eventually erected : its timber and lead were plundered. Mr. Packer, the owner, had some difficulty in getting his property restored, and only did so by virtue of an order from the House of Peers. When he did so he was threatened by Robins, an ensign in the Farnham regiment, from whom he had apparently recovered some of the stolen metal, that he would 'have his blood or his lead.' This happened at the house of Gabriel Coxe, of Newbury, which he left unsatisfied, and with 'great threatenings.' Meeting Mr. Packer two days later in Basingstoke, he again assaulted him, but nothing came of it, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Packer regained from Mr. Robins and others his lost property, three tons of which were then in the possession of Barnard Reeves, grocer, of Basingstoke.

Plundering and siege have done their work on the old building, and nothing now remains but the shot-marked gate-house and the grass-grown earthworks, behind which stood, for so many days, the gallant troopers and musketeers of Sir John Boys.

Berkshire's greatest Castle, that of Windsor, alone exists in a perfect condition. Its exact origin is obscure, though it is possible that an earthen fortress may have existed here in British as well as Saxon times ; but it is

likely that the Castle for which Earl Harold paid rent in the Confessor's time was situated elsewhere.*　All that is certain is that in 1066 Edward, then at the ' Royal Ville of Wendlesore,' granted twenty hides of land here, with the manor of ' Steine,' to his newly-erected monastery of St. Peter's, at Westminster, ' for the hope of eternal reward, for the remission of all his sins, the sins of his father, mother, and ancestors, and to the praise of God.'　This was probably dated from *Old* Windsor, though the grant may have included New Windsor also.　But Norman William, too, was enamoured of the pleasant site, and exchanged it, with the monastery, later on for the lands of Ferniges and. Wokendune, in Essex ; and here, at any rate, he erected the Castle, which, together with ' Walingford,' is mentioned in ' Domesday,' and which was erected on a hill ' two miles N.W. of Old Windsor.'　But at most it was but a rude Norman keep in which William II. held court, and which Henry I. enlarged, enclosing the ground occupied by the lower and middle wards.　In 1110 he summoned all his nobles for the first time to ' New Windsor.'　Here, also, he was married to Adeliza, his second wife ; when Ralph, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who claimed the right to perform the coronation ceremony instead of the Bishop of Salisbury, to whose diocese Windsor then belonged, was so furious at the opposition to his claim that ' he could hardly be entreated by the Lords to refrain from striking off ' the King's crown.　Eventually the ceremony was performed by the Primate.　Stephen, Henry II., Richard I., and John only executed the necessary repairs.　Though there is considerable doubt whether any of the existing masonry is older than the reign of Henry II., it is still possible that the King's Gate, destroyed in the reign of George IV., but of which the side wall, portcullis, groove,

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* Still, Harold's Castle was built in the manor of Clewer (Clivere), in which the present Castle was situate.

and hinges remain, was of this date.* The passage, too, has a vault of Norman character.

There is a story told by Fabyan which, if true, shows how deeply Henry II. felt the conduct of his sons. He says, ' It is recorded, that in a chamber at Wyndesore he caused to be painted an eagle, with four birds, whereof three of them all rased the body of the old eagle, and the fourth was scratching at the old eagle's eyes. When the question was asked of him what that picture should signify? it was answered by him, " This old eagle," said he, " is myself ; and these four eagles betoken my four sons, the which cease not to pursue my death, and especially my youngest son John, which now I love most, shall most especially await and imagin my death." '

At this period, too, the vineyards of the Castle were of such importance that a regular annual charge is recorded for the cost of the vintage and for gathering the grapes. One of these vineyards occupied the Castle ditch.

It is to Henry III. that the most important alterations and repairs are due ; and much of the buildings that form the lower ward date their present foundations from this reign. He repaired the breaches in the wall, built a chapel, the ' Bell,' ' Clure's,' ' Berner's,' and the ' Almoner's ' towers, on the north side, and the Garter and Salisbury or Chancellor's towers on the west ; and further improved the building for the habitation of the King and his Court. The ditch was also completed on this side by the removal of houses, for which the sum of £7 10s. was paid, and the fortress was strengthened with a barbican. Of these works sufficient traces still exist.

' The prison chamber in the base of Clewer Tower still remains. Under the Garter Tower was a stable-yard and stables, with a fine wide arch. The King's Hall was in the Clewer Tower, now the library of the Dean and Chapter, and much modernized. The Royal Kitchen was beyond,

* Godwin, p. 230.

and further on, following the north wall, the chamber of the King and Queen. Further on still was the cloister and chapel, with a Galilee porch at the west-end.'* Also the South Ambulatory of the present Dean's cloister, the door behind the altar in St. George's Chapel, and some masonry of the Domus Regis on the north of the chapel, belong to the period of the Henrys.

The country round, so often the scene of conflict between the Barons and the King, gained little by the presence of the royal residence. Adam de Gordon, a notorious bandit, who ravaged Berks and Hants, as Turpin did later, was defeated in personal fight by the third Henry's son Edward ; and, after pardon, given a small office in Windsor. When the latter became King, it was a favourite residence of Eleanor his Queen, and here three of their children, John, Eleanor, and Harry, were born. The royal property in the neighbourhood was improved, and waste lands cultivated and sown ; but even then the forest laws were strict, and the Bishop of Winchester was distrained upon for trespasses committed in the Forest of Windsor.† The Castle chapel was enriched with relics. On the day of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, in 1300, the King gave 5s. to the 'Cross of Gneyth' (a portion of the true cross), and 3s. to the 'Thorn of Christ's Crown.' There is no record of any additions to the buildings in this reign. Edward III., who was born here, made it his chief residence, and ordered considerable improvements, practically enlarging the Castle to its present extent. It had been at times a prison, and from the time when the Earl of Northumberland had been incarcerated there by William II., to the imprisonment of Marshal Bellisle, who was taken prisoner while crossing through Hanover in the reign of George II.— the first and last important victims—it had been used for such state purposes. It is even said that it was due to a suggestion from Kings John of France and David

* Godwin.   † 'Hist. Windsor,' vol. i., p. 113.

of Scotland, who were detained here in this reign, after
their conflict at Crecy and Neville's Cross respectively, that
the enlargement of the Royal fortress was decided on ;
and that the cost was defrayed by their ransoms. Be that
as it may, workmen and materials of all sorts were pressed
into the service of the King, and Lord Furnival's woods, at
Farnham, were purchased to supply timber for the work.
Carpenters received 2d. a day, and William of Wykeham,
the chief architect, 7s. a week !

The changes, as well as additions, were considerable.
The old keep was rebuilt as the Round Tower, to receive
the round table for the new order of the Knights of the
Garter.*

'As many as 600 men were employed in the Castle, and
200 in the quarry during some portion of the time,' the
total cost, £500, being equivalent to about £10,000 now.
The Chapel of Henry III. was completed with cloisters,
and the entire tendency of the rebuilding was to effect a
revolution in castellated architecture.

'The spirit of feudal warfare had subsided, or was quelled
by the increasing power of the monarchy ; and though
security might still be an important element in constructing
the habitations of the nobility, yet it was no longer im-
perative that it should be purchased at the expense of the
comforts and amenities of life. The less powerful baron
had therefore quitted the narrow confines of his keep tower
to breathe more cheerfully in the embattled and moated
house, while the domestic buildings of the great castles,
instead of lurking under the shelter of the ramparts, were
compacted into the lofty and majestic structure grouped
with massive towers of defence, uniting an aspect of im-
pregnable strength without to the progressive refinements
of art within.' †

The result of the architect's labours was to produce a
work of considerable grandeur, and the inscription said to

* Godwin.   † 'Essay on Windsor Castle,' Paynter.

have been placed on its wall, ' Hoc fecit Wykeham,' and which called down the censure of the King, was not unjustifiable. But successive innovations have destroyed much of the character of his work. The, miscalled Norman, gate at the north-west corner of the upper ward, the vaults beneath the apartments here, the groining of the Devil's and King John's Towers, the Rose Tower, and the Dean's Cloister, may reasonably be attributed to this period. All else has been altered. The most noteworthy event other than this extension of the buildings was the installation of the Order of the Garter. Edward III. had previously held a ' Round Table,' inviting Knights and Esquires from all countries to take part in jousts and rejoicings at his Castle of Windsor. This occurred in 1344, but no mention is made of the foundation of a knightly order ; and not long after, previous to the undoubted date of the formation of the society, it is on record that the garter, with its well-known motto, was not uncommonly used as a badge or device. There is a charge, for example, for ' making a bed of blue taffeta for the King, powdered with Garters, containing this Mottoe—*Hony soit q mal y pense ;*' and again, ' for making twelve blue garters, embroidered with gold and silk, each having the mottoe,' etc., for the ' King's hastilude at Eltham,' in 1347-48. But there is no doubt that in the autumn of 1348 a regular and perpetual order of knighthood, consisting of twenty-six persons, including the King, was instituted as ' The Society of the Garter.' Whether the traditional story as to its origin in connection with the fair Countess of Salisbury has a basis of truth is questionable, though not unlikely. The anecdote dates much further back, and the celebrated badge may have been chosen from such an accident, for the choice would have been quite in keeping with the sentiment of gallantry of the time.* But there is no proof of it ; and even the current translation of the motto has been made to fit into

* ' Hist. Windsor.'

its assumed origin, rather than be correctly rendered ; its true meaning being ' Dishonour,' or ' Be he disgraced who thinks ill of it.'*

Be the origin of the order what it may, it has its place in the history of Windsor. Its knights had stalls in its church, and the 'College of St. George,' consisting of twenty-six Canons and twenty-six Poor Knights, being the same in number as the Knights of the Garter, was established about the same time. Thus the lower ward became appropriated to their use, and for that of the guests who attended the feasts and gatherings of the order ; the royal apartments being transferred thence to the new ward, which the King had built.

Here, too, died Queen Philippa, she who on her deathbed could say to her husband, as is touchingly told by Froissart, ' Sir, we have in peace, joy, and great prosperity used all our time together ;' and Edward himself, some eight years afterwards, fulfilled his promise made to her then, and was laid beside her at Westminster.

Little occurred, other than matters of somewhat domestic interest, for some reigns. In Richard II.'s time the chapel was endowed with many relics. There were crosses, crowns, images and jewels ; bones of St. Bartholomew, St. Thomas, St. Margaret of Scotland, St. Thomas of Hereford, Sts. William of England and of York, St. Mark, St. Geran, St. Maurice, St. Elizabeth, St. Vitale, the good Archbishop Edmund, St. Thomas the Apostle, and one of the 11,000 virgins. There were ' branches of silver' containing an arm-bone of St. George, and fragments of the supper-table of our Lord and of the Virgin's tomb ; some blood of St. Thomas of Canterbury, and one of the stones with which St. Stephen was martyred ; and a shirt belonging to the same saint, together with one of St. Thomas. There was a white girdle which St. John had given to St. Mary, and some milk and a candle-end of the Virgin Mary's !

* Sir H. Nicholas.

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But these, like many other things, disappeared when the Reformation came. The chapel was under repairs in Richard II.'s time, under the superintendence of Geoffrey Chaucer, who, as 'Clerk of the King's works,' received 2s. a day for his labours; and here the King, in April, 1399, bade a last affectionate farewell to his baby Queen. Froissart describes the sad parting, all the more sorrowful because of the fidelity of the young wife to her husband's memory in after years at Wallingford.* He says, 'After the Canons had chaunted very sweetly (in the chapel), and the King himself had chaunted a collect and made his offerings, he took the Queen in his arms and kissed her twelve or thirteen times, saying sorrowfully: " Adieu, Madame, until we meet again." And the Queen began to weep, saying: " Alas! my lord, will you leave me here?" Upon which the King's eyes filled with tears, and he said: " By no means, mamye, but I will go first, and you, ma chère, shall come there afterwards." Then the King and Queen partook of wine and comfits at the Deanery, and all who chose did the same. Afterwards the King stooped down, and took and lifted the Queen from the ground and held her a long while in his arms and kissed her at least ten times, saying over, "Adieu, ma chère, until we meet again," and then placed her on the ground and kissed her at least twice more; and, by our Lady, I never saw so great a lord make so much of, or show such affection to, a lady as did King Richard to his Queen. Great pity it was that they separated, for they never saw each other more.' For on his return from Ireland he was taken prisoner by Henry of Lancaster, who, after the deposition of Richard, ascended the throne as Henry IV.

Both Richard and his successors kept Welsh prisoners here, and Henry held in durance Prince James of Scotland for eleven years. Not that his period of punishment was all

* See p. 94; Murray, p. 16.

pain. From the top of the Maiden's Tower, which had successively been called that of the Earl Marshal, of the Maid of Honour, and of the Devil, he saw and loved Jane, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, whom he afterwards married. He has left on record his poetical effusion on the subject, in which, describing the garden, he says :

> ' Now was there maid, fast by the Touris wall,
>   A gardynfaire and in the Corneris set
> Ane herbere grene, with wandis long and small
>   Railit about, and so with treis set
> Was al the place, and hawthorn hegis knet
>   That lyf was non, walkyng there forbye
>   That mycht within scarce any wight aspye.
> And on the small grene twistis set
>   The lytel swete nytingale and song
> So loud and clere the ympnis consecrat
>   Of luvis use, now soft, now lowd among
>   That all the gardynes and the wallis rong
>   Rycht of thaire song.'*

But Henry VI. freed him, and he returned to Scotland. The King had been born here, and his father seems to have had no hopeful feelings as to his future. For though, as he ' lay at siege before Meaux, he gave God thanks in that it had pleased Divine Providence to send him a son which might succeed in his crown and sceptre,' he said unto the Lord Fitzhugh, when he was told where the child was born, ' My Lord, I, Henry, born at Monmouth, shall small time reign and much get ; and Henry, born at Windsor, shall long reign and all lose ; but as God will, so be it.'

Henry VI. had little to do with Windsor, but Richard III. had his body removed there ; so there he rests. A slab of black marble marks his tomb ; and of it Pope sympathetically writes :

> ' Here o'er the martyr-king the marble weeps,
> While fast beside him once fear'd Edward sleeps ;
> The grave unites, where e'en the great find rest,
> And blended lie th' oppressor and th' opprest.'

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* ' The King's Quair '; ' Chronicle of Scottish Poetry.'

Edward IV., however, left his mark on the royal fortresses in the Chapel of St. George, which he commenced, and in which he was buried. It was completed in Henry VII.'s reign, when the vaulting was finished by a subscription from the Knights of the Garter, to which the King contributed £100 ; and he also built the great gateway.

Many festivals of the Garter were held from time to time until the reign of Edward VI., when the statutes were altered to suit the new religious condition of things ; but Mary, who succeeded him, expunged the Protestant corrections from the statutes, and invested her husband Philip with the knightly order when he visited Windsor after their marriage at Winchester. Anne Boleyn was made Marchioness of Pembroke in full court at Windsor, and one of her successors, Jane Seymour, was brought here to be buried. Her Latin epitaph, by Bishop Godwin, a Berkshire man from Oakingham, runs :

> ' Phœnix fana jacet nato Phœnice, dolendum
> Secula Phœnices nulla tulisse duas.'

During Henry VIII.'s reign Wolsey embellished Henry VII.'s Chapel to make it a tomb-house, but it was never destined to hold his body. Even the black marble sarcophagus that was to contain his remains was never finished. It was despoiled of its brass by the Puritans, who sold it for £600, and the marble now covers the tomb of Nelson in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul. Elizabeth, alarmed at the spread of the plague in London, took refuge in the Castle, where also were brought the French hostages given for the safety of Calais. The chapels were despoiled of much of their wealth, the rood-loft was pulled down and sold, and the priests 'that had wives should put them out of the College ; and for time to come to lie no more within that place.' The Queen was a keen student in those days. Schoolmaster Ascham so appreciated her labours, as compared with those of the male youth,

as to break out thus: 'It was their shame that one maid should go beyond them all in excellency of learning and knowledge of divers tongues.' The great terrace, one of the beauties of the royal residence, owes its construction to her taste; and 'Queen Elizabeth's Gallery,' which was erected in 1576, still forms a portion of the library. But the internal arrangements of the royal apartments did not show at this time any great attention to comfort. Her maids of honour asked that the partitions in their rooms, 'that is of boards there,' should 'be made higher, for that the servants look over.' Nor was the Queen herself much better off, for she complained that her dinners were cold; a matter of no great wonderment, seeing that the meat had been brought all the way from the bakehouse in Peascod Street. Though James I. often resided at Windsor, nothing of importance was done by him there except to instal Prince Henry as Knight of the Garter; after which, with his wonted carefulness, he attempted to reduce the absurd expenditure attached to the ceremony. He employed John Norden, the topographer, to survey the Honour of Windsor; and his careful work gives the best and most accurate account, both by illustrations and in written matter, of the then condition of the royal residence. But his son Charles left a more serious record on its annals. The plague raged much in Windsor during the first years of his reign, so that his visits were not frequent; but he was present at the ratification of peace with Louis of France in St. George's Chapel, when the Dean, and *not* the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was, nevertheless, present, administered the oath to the French Ambassador, the Marquis of Chasteneauf. It appears from this that the Dean held supreme spiritual power within the precincts of the Church. One painful incident occurred about this time in the execution of one John Dean, a child about nine years old, for burning two houses in Windsor with 'malice, revenge, craft, and cunning.' This was the youngest person ever hanged in

England; and the law relative to the responsibility of
children of tender years has been practically unaltered,
though under modern conditions such a sentence would
scarcely be carried into effect. About 1634 the King's
visits were more frequent; and it was then that the few
alterations, such as replacing Queen Mary's fountain by
another, and rebuilding the banqueting-hall, were made.

But troubled times were approaching. The Church-
wardens' accounts show payment for training the train-
bands; and riots and disturbances occurred in the King's
forest, where Aminadab Harrison of Ockingham and others
killed the King's deer. A less reverent spirit towards the
sovereign than had obtained heretofore was arising in the
land, and Berkshire fully shared in it. The church-restora-
tions of Laud and others had met with as little favour as
had the redecoration of the town cross by Dr. Goodman,
a Canon of the Chapel of St. George. And when Mr.
Bagshaw of Windsor reported to the House of Commons
that troops of horse and waggons of ammunition had
assembled at Windsor, where the King was, the Commons
appointed a committee 'for putting the Kingdom into a
Posture of Defence.'

Shortly afterwards Charles went to York, never again to
return to Windsor free and unfettered.

The riotous proceedings on the borders of the forest still
continued; for 'the people in Berkshire adjoining the
Forest of Windsor have a resolution speedily to come in a
tumultuous manner and pull down the pales of the Great
Park at Windsor;' and soon the 'royal borough' took a
decided part, and both subscribed towards the sum the
Commons had levied, and received Colonel Venn with two
companies of foot, who were sent in the name of the
'King and Parliament' to 'take some especial care of
Windsor Castle.' With him was another regicide, Captain
John Berkstead, afterwards Governor of Reading, and
thither gathered 'severall well affected gentlemen,' who

preferred to ' fortifie themselves, and to make out-workes,' so that the Cavaliers who intended to ' draw to Windsor have lost their labour.'

Prince Rupert made an unsuccessful attack on the Castle in 1642, and during the winter of that year it was the headquarters of the Earl of Essex, while the forces of the King were at Reading, Abingdon, and Oxford ; and here, too, were incarcerated many Royalist officers, who had fallen into the hands of their opponents.

The Castle suffered much in those rough days. The Canons and other officers were dismissed, but, subject to search, were allowed to take away their goods ; and the Chapel of St. George was spoiled and dismantled, the coat of mail of Edward IV. being carried off, and even the woodwork torn up and demolished. The plate was sent to the Guildhall, and there melted and converted into coin to aid Fairfax in the north ; and the sequestration of all property of ' the malignants,' both here and at Eton, was rigorously enforced. Dr. Stewart's place, as provost of Eton, was taken from him for ' joining himself to those that have levied war against the Parliament' ; and Mr. Rous was appointed in his stead. But the garrison murmured much at irregularity in their pay, so that in 1644 it was partially disbanded. Even then there was discontent and mutiny. Middlesex trained-bands had to reinforce the garrison and overawe the rebellious spirits.

In 1645 Colonel Christopher Whitchcott became Governor, Colonel Venn being employed in recruiting ; for the Chamberlain's accounts show that on the 26th of June of that year 19s. was paid for a ' gallon of Brewed wyne, and 4 loaves of sugar weighing xi. lb., at 16d. per lb., when Mr. Maior and some of his company went to Colonell Venn at his goinge awaye from the Castell ;' and the larger sum of 27s. 3d. was expended to celebrate the entrance of the new Governor.

Soon met here that solemn conclave of generals who

resolved that 'the King should be prosecuted for life as a criminal person;' and 'great councils of the army' assembled to consider its reduction. No element of religious enthusiasm was omitted to increase the feeling of the sectaries. In the dismantled and ruined Chapel of St. George 'the duties of the day were performed by divers of the officers, amongst whom there was a sweet Harmony. The Lieutenant-General (Cromwell), Commissary-General Ireton, Colonel Tichburne, Colonel Hewson, Mr. Peters, and other officers, pray'd very fervently and pathetically'; and this continued from nine in the morning till seven at night.

Meanwhile Charles, virtually a prisoner after his surrender by the Scots, had been removed from Holdenby, where he had lived under the superintendence of commissioners appointed by the Parliament, to Newmarket, and then to Windsor. This was apparently at Cromwell's instigation, for Fairfax disowned it. At any rate he came here, and after staying at Lord Craven's at Caversham, where he met his children; then at Latimer, with the Countess of Devonshire; at Oatlands, Hampton, and Carisbrooke (at both of the latter he attempted his escape); and lastly at Hurst Castle, he was again removed to Windsor, under an escort of horse. Colonel Harrison, who commanded this guard of 2,000 men, took good care lest his prisoner should escape, as he had indeed arranged to do in passing the woods of Bagshot. Around him were 100 mounted soldiers, each having his pistol 'ready spanned' in his hand; and the inhabitants of Windsor crowded to see the unwonted spectacle of the King brought a prisoner by his own subjects to the Royal Castle. The stern colonel of the Parliament had scant reverence for the monarch. Again he was his guard when removed to St. James's, and sat in the same carriage with the King, 'his hat upon his head.' But the earthly trials of Charles were soon to terminate, and after

* 'Hist. Windsor,' vol. ii., p. 219.

the fatal 30th of January, 1648-9, the body of the Second
Stuart was removed finally to Windsor, there to be
interred 'in a decent manner, provided that the whole
expense should not exceed £500.' But here the generosity
of the Parliament ceased.

So dismantled and ruined was the Chapel of St. George,
that the mourners of the King recognised not 'where they
were.' They long searched for a vault in which to inter
the body, and finally lighted on one which was supposed
to contain the bodies of the Eighth Henry and Jane
Seymour. Here they placed the coffin, with the simple
inscription cut in lead—' King Charles, 1648.' No service
was read over the grave. The fanatic Governor of the
Castle forbade the use of the Book of Common Prayer
that had been put down by law, for to him 'it was not
lawful; and he would not suffer it to be used in that
garrison where he commanded.' The just man knew no
mercy; he did only what he deemed his duty; but the
prayers of those who followed their master to the grave
were none the less fervent; and when the pall-clad coffin
reached the chapel's western door, the falling storm had
made it ' white as the driven snow.'

The coffin was discovered and opened in 1813. Sir
H. Halford, who was present, describes the complexion of
the face as dark and discoloured. 'The forehead and
temples had little or nothing of their muscular substance;
the cartilage of the nose was gone; but the left eye, in the
moment of first exposure, was open and full, though it
vanished almost immediately. The shape of the face was
a long oval. The hair was thick at the back of the head
and nearly black, that of his beard was of a reddish-brown.
On holding up the head, the muscles of the neck had
evidently contracted considerably; and the fourth cervical
vertebra was cut through transversely, leaving the substance
of the divided portions smooth and even—an appearance
which could only have been produced by a heavy blow

from a very sharp instrument, and which furnished the last proof wanting to identify Charles I.'

In 1649, a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to decide on the disposal of the Royal Castle, property, and park. A survey was made of all of it, and the House at first decided that 'the Castle of Windsor, with all the Houses, Parks, and Lands there, belonging to the State, be sold for ready money;' but later on this was negatived by ten votes, and only the 'Little Park' was surveyed for sale. This seems, by a letter under Cromwell's seal, to have been actually sold, and repurchased for the Protector.

Many political prisoners, both old friends and old foes, were kept in durance at the Castle. General Browne, formerly Puritan Governor of Abingdon, Mr. Ashburnham, and Colonel Legg, who assisted in the attempted escape of Charles from Hampton, Earls Lauderdale, Kelly, and Rothes, and many other Scottish and English prisoners were detained here. The three Earls were prisoners during the whole nine years of the Commonwealth, while numbers of the private soldiers were transported beyond the seas. The Lord Protector often visited the Castle in his latter days. Sums varying from 2s. to 2s. 6d. were paid for a bonfire, for the ringers, and for 'proclaymeinge' him in 1657; and the Poor Knights of Windsor attended his funeral in 1658. Whatever may be thought of his policy, Cromwell himself when in power preserved rather than destroyed what was left of the Castle, for he 'prevented further ware and spoliation of the Chapel at Windsor and elsewhere, from the time he possessed the power.'* He occasionally resided there. He certainly kept together the endowments of the College, and the landed estates were greatly improved in value during his administration. He instituted a regular establishment for the service of the chapel, and attached it to the foundation of the Poor

* ' Hist. Windsor,' vol. ii., p. 282.

Knights, which he maintained, and issued an ordinance of twelve articles for its regulation.

The Restoration was inaugurated by the expulsion from the disused buildings of the Castle of those poor persons who had with their wives and families been permitted to dwell there. The buildings were repaired; feasts of St. George were celebrated in 1662; and the ' Star Building,' afterwards named the ' Stuart Building,' was erected on the north-east side. Antonio Verro was employed to paint in fresco the walls and ceilings of the apartments, and to Grinling Gibbons was entrusted the restoration of the carved work. Christopher Wren had the general supervision.

The ditch was filled in, the northern terrace was completed, and the repaired north front was furnished with incongruous windows ; and the ' Devil's Tower,' now fitted for the reception of the maids of honour, received a more gentle name from that circumstance. In the upper ward was placed a statue of the King. It was executed in copper by Stada, an Italian, at the expense of Tobias Ruslat, who had been faithful to his master, even unto exile with him.

Rupert became Constable, and decorated the Round Tower internally with arms. Its exterior had recently been disfigured for some unknown reason with a facing of brick. Neither Charles II. nor James II. did much at Windsor. They lived there, and hunted and went away. James Francis Edward, the King's son, who became the ' Old Pretender,' was born at Windsor in 1688 ; and in the November of that year his royal father left the Castle for Salisbury to be with the army that had gathered there to meet the Prince of Orange from Torbay. He did not remain long, but returned by Wallingford to Windsor and so to London, followed along the same route by William of Orange, who soon became the King. He cared little for Windsor, nor did Anne, little money being spent even in the necessary repairs ; but in George III.'s reign the Queen's

Lodge was added, as being more suitable for a residence, and St. George's Chapel was restored, its east window being fitted with painted glass by West. The Castle was ceasing to be a fortress, so the southern and eastern ditches were filled up, and the apartments of the north front improved by the alteration of Wren's windows. The Order of Knighthood of the Garter, now a mere honour or badge of distinction, was extended to include others than the sovereign and the twenty-five knights of the original constitution, thus destroying that strict principle of exclusion which had lasted for four centuries, and which had so much tended to maintain the high estimation in which the order has been held throughout Europe. The continental principles of the Georges did not share this distinctly English feeling of exclusiveness, and in 1805 the last formal ceremony of the installation of the knights ceased. Finally, Wolsey's Chapel was converted into a 'Tomb House,' and here have been interred the bodies of Princes Octavius and Alfred, children of George III., removed from Westminster Abbey ; the Duchess of Brunswick ; Princesses Adelaide and Elizabeth, children of the Duke of Clarence ; Princess Amelia ; Princess Charlotte ; Queen Charlotte ; the Duke of Kent ; George III. ; the Duke of York ; George IV. ; William IV. ; Princess Augusta ; and Queen Adelaide.

The last restoration of the Castle and its present appearance is due to the plans and works of Sir Jeffrey Wyatville in the reign of George IV. A thorough overhauling of the building resulted in much necessary internal repairs, in the removal of useless and dilapidated edifices, and the modernizing of the exterior, to render it more suitable as a royal palace. The Round Tower was heightened 30 feet, and a watch-tower added on its summit, thus rendering it a more imposing feature than it had previously been. The upper ward still remained as the abode of the Sovereign, the eastern end containing the

private apartments, the northern side the State galleries, and the south the rooms for visitors. Only the royal stables and the conversion of the Tomb House to a memorial chapel of the Prince Consort belong to the present reign, except the restoration of St. George's Chapel to somewhat of its pristine character by the removal of the coats of limewash, paint, and varnish that had obscured the surface of the original materials. In or near it now lie the last princes of two lines of kings. At its western end, without the walls, rests the body of Prince Alamayu of Abyssinia, son of Theodore, who perished at Magdala. The English service had been read over father, mother, and child, and English soldiers stood by the grave of each. In one of the southern chapels is Napoleon, Prince Imperial of France. His effigy wears the uniform of an English artilleryman, and, clasping the sword he carried in a war of England's making, the figure lies with the head resting on cushions embroidered with the 'Golden Bees' of the empire.

The Wolsey Chapel, neglected after the Cardinal's fall, first came again into use when James II. repaired it for a Roman Catholic service. But this displeased the people. They did not care that Protestantism should be professed in St. George's and Romanism in that of Wolsey, so they broke the windows by way of protest, and this teaching had its effect. Again the chapel was disused. It became a schoolhouse in 1742, and later on George III. made it a 'Tomb House.' In this state it remained until, after the death of the Prince Consort, it was redecorated in its present form. It is lavishly ornamented with rich carvings in wood and alabaster, is panelled with polished marble and pictures illustrative of the 'Resurrection of Christ,' by Baron Trinqueti; the rich windows designed by Clayton and Bell contain, among sacred subjects, the heraldic bearings of the Prince's family since the year 801, and the roof is enriched with mosaic by Salviati. The

cenotaph, an altar-tomb, stands in the centre of the nave, and is made of Pyrenean and Sicilian marbles, and supports on its upper slab the marble effigy of the Prince clad in mediæval armour. The body itself was removed thence to Frogmore, when the special mausoleum was completed. This is a cruciform building with an octagonal dome, constructed in the Romanesque style, and lined with polished marble, and contains a central sarcophagus of dark-grey Aberdeen granite, on the upper slab of which are spaces for two figures, one of which is occupied by an effigy of the Prince.

This terminates the list of castles proper; but there were other buildings that had been castellated during the mediæval period.

Thus there were Beaumys, near Shinfield, a mansion fortified in 1338 by Nicholas de la Beke (or Beche); Sonnyng, where the Salisbury Bishops Robert and Radulphus crenellated their episcopal palace, still in their diocese, in the reigns of Edward III. and Richard II.; and the Abbey at Abingdon in the fourth year of Edward III. Each of the former was referred to as 'Mansum manerii,' and the latter 'Totum situm Abbati, Abbas et Conventus de Abyndon.'*

Of Beaumys the romantic story is told by Lyons, that in 1352 a certain John of Dalton 'outrageously assaulted it, killing Michael de Poynings, uncle to Lord Poynings, Thomas le Clerk, and others, and carrying off, besides goods and chattels to the value of £1,000, 'several prisoners, among whom was Lady de la Beche.'

The same family held the Manor of Aldworth and a castellated house there in the reigns of Edward I. and Edward II., whence one of them, Sir Edmund, was taken as a prisoner to Pomfret Castle for being concerned in the escape of the Lords Berkley and Audley from the Berkshire Castle at Wallingford. Another, Sir Nicholas, was

* Godwin.

' Lieutenant of the Tower' and guardian to the Black Prince ; but Kings' favours are uncertain, and in 1340 he was committed to the Tower for not sending timely remittances to the King. The year after, however, he appeared with him in Brittany. Afterwards he became Member of Parliament, and was made Seneschal of Gascony.

It was the widow of this knight who was the heroine in Lysons's story. She was the relict of Edmond Bacoun before she became the wife of Sir Nicholas Beche, and after his death in 1346 she married Sir J. Arderne ; but he, too, must have soon died, as after her abduction she was ' forcibly ' espoused to John de Dalton, and deceased two years afterwards. Hers was a romantic history in a romantic family of great importance once in Berks, for Sir Nicholas inherited no less than seventeen manors in the county.

Aldworth* Church contains the family monuments, consisting of six stone effigies of knights in armour, five of which have their legs crossed, and two ladies. Two of these are on altar-tombs, the rest lie under enriched decorated canopies, and local village gossip has designated three of them John Long, John Strong, and John Neverafraid. There is yet another figure under an arch in the church wall, and to him the same authorities have given the name of John Everafraid ; for as Captain Symonds says in his diary of 1644, ' He gave his soule to the Divil, if ever he was buried either in Church or Churchyard, so he was buryed under the Church wall under an arche.'

Both these castellated houses have absolutely disappeared. Of Aldworth, the name alone lives in ' Beche Farm,' and of Beaumys there is even less trace. They have passed away entirely, and the grass grows green over the mansions of these Berkshire families. The Abbey at Abingdon was fortified for security against chance marauders, and its history is ecclesiastical rather than

* Aldworth, from *Eald*, old, and *worth*, a land or manor ; in Domesday it is spelt Elleorde.

military.   The same remark applies to the Episcopal
Palace at Sonning, which had been the residence of the
Saxon Bishops before the see was united to that of
Sherborne ; and hither it was that Isabella of Valois, the
wife of Richard II., fled to the Church's care on the deposi-
tion of her royal husband.   It remained in the hands of
the Bishops until the reign of Elizabeth, when it reverted
to the Crown.   Now its site is only marked by an old ash-
tree.

   None of these latter buildings have been actively concerned
in the military history of the county.   They were merely
dwelling-houses capable of defence, and were rarely called
upon to test their powers in this respect.   The *raison d'être*
of fortresses and strong places in Berkshire has gone for
evermore, it may be devoutly hoped.   Those of Farringdon,
Reading and Newbury have left no trace even of their
existence ; Wallingford is but a name ; and of Donnington
Castle there are but battered towers and ruined walls.

   Of them all Windsor alone remains, no longer a Castle
armed and garrisoned to overawe the land, but the principal
country mansion of the Sovereign of a loyal and law-
abiding people.
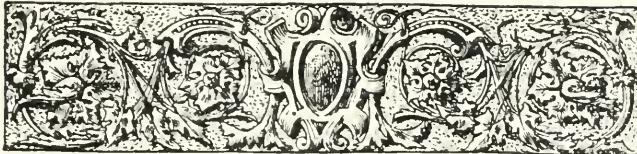
CHAPTER VI.

ITS MILITARY HISTORY.—(*b*) ITS WARS.

THE Berkshire fortresses have all, at times, taken a more or less prominent share in the internal troubles of the kingdom ; and the first instance in which they were put to a military use was in the struggle between Stephen and Queen Matilda. Though the succession to the English throne had been settled by Henry I. on his daughter by will, his nephew Stephen usurped the Crown, and, to appease the Barons and clergy, authorized or permitted the construction of castles, which were the head-quarters of unscrupulous nobles, with a following of still more unscrupulous mercenaries. When, therefore, the Empress Matilda, attended by the Earl of Gloucester, landed to assert her rights, these became the centres of the spoliation, murder, and rapine that followed in the footsteps of the Civil War, which raged in a desultory fashion till nearly the end of Stephen's reign.

Brian Fitzcount, with Miles of Gloucester, held Wallingford for the Empress when she set foot in England, and hither her opponent, Stephen, came ; but, instead of attacking it, he contented himself with building a fort on its eastern approach at Crowmarsh to 'contain' and check the garrison. While he marched by Cerne and Trowbridge to Malmesbury, which surrendered to his army, Miles made a sortie and captured this 'barbican,' which threatened him

from Crowmarsh. But the King did not return. In 1140 he was at Reading; and, going by way of Ely to Lincoln, he was taken prisoner the following year in the battle there.

Meanwhile the operations of the Empress met with varying success. Leaving London in 1141, she proceeded to Reading, where she met D'Oyley of Oxford, who promised to surrender to her the Castle in that town; and then went on to Winchester, where she was foiled in her attack upon the city, and retired to Devizes. Her brother Robert was soon after taken prisoner, and eventually exchanged for the King; while the Empress took up her quarters in Oxford. But the liberation of Stephen had given new vigour to his followers. They attacked Oxford with such resolution that the Empress, fearing capture, fled with a small escort, and, dressed in white, escaped the vigilance of the assailants on a snowy night, and took refuge in Wallingford, where she met the Earl of Gloucester. This castle, with Farringdon and Newbury, was garrisoned by her adherents; but Reading and Windsor held out for the King. Around these fortresses the war surged. It was essentially one of sieges, in which neither party gained a decided advantage. At length Oxford fell, and Stephen, after pursuing the Empress to Wallingford, where he was checked, retired to Wilton, and here, attacked by Gloucester, his army was dispersed.

Hideous cruelties were visited on those who were so unfortunate as to become prisoners. 'They hanged up men by their feet, and smoked them with foul smoke. Some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head, and burning things were hung on to their feet. They put knotted strings about their heads, and writhed them till they went into the brain. They put men into prisons where adders and snakes and toads were crawling, and so they tormented them.'

Still the struggle went on. In 1145 the fortress of

Farringdon, which Gloucester had erected, fell. Stephen advanced to Wallingford, repaired the fort at Crowmarsh, and also probably erected that which is referred to* at the bottom of Bretwell (Brightwell) Hill to the west ; but he soon retired, and did not appear again until 1152. Finally, after reducing the Castle of Newbury by ' siege and force of assault,' he for the third time reached Wallingford, and sat down before it for a regular siege.

Meanwhile the Empress had retired to Flanders in 1146 ; and her son Henry, after keeping the flame alive in Scotland, whence he made many incursions across the border, returned to Normandy, to land in England in 1153 and attack with his following the Castle of Malmesbury.

No movements are so difficult to follow, and appear to have so little method, as those of the belligerents in this war. Places fall and are retaken. Sieges are raised without apparent cause. Armies appear at places without evidence of how they got there, and escape past enemies who fear to attack them. Thus Henry, having captured Malmesbury, approached Wallingford, and Stephen at once moved on London—why, it is hard to say. A battle would have settled the question, but that both parties seem to have feared. Doubtless the roads, neglected as they had been, were poor, the country ruined by plunder and devastations, and the weather so bad as to render the support of an army difficult; but it was only postponing the evil day. Henry relieved and succoured Wallingford, destroyed the fort at Brightwell, as well as that at Crowmarsh again, and the Castle, so it is said, at Reading.

The valley of the Thames and the great western road in Berkshire were thus in his hands ; but, still avoiding London, he took Stamford and besieged ' Gypswich ' and Nottingham. For the last time Stephen appeared before Wallingford. The place had a curious fascination for

* Camden.

him. He had scarcely settled down before it when Henry, raising the siege of Nottingham, moved to its relief. But the country was weary of these internal troubles, and a treaty between the belligerents was agreed to.

By it Stephen reigned for life and Henry was to succeed him. By it, also, 1,115 castles that had been erected in England were to be demolished, and among them were those of Farringdon and Reading, if they had not been destroyed before. Newbury seems to have been left with a royal garrison ; and Windsor did not apparently exercise any influence over the local campaigns. Only in the treaty of Wallingford is it mentioned that 'the Tower of London and the fortress of Windsor, with the consent of Holy Church, are delivered to Richard de Lucy safely to be kept ; and Richard de Lucy has sworn, and has delivered his son in pledge, to remain in the hands and custody of the Archbishop of Canterbury, that after his decease he shall deliver the castle to the Duke.'

The surviving castles saw little active service in the reign of Henry II. With him the wave of Norman conquest that had swept over England sank and became absorbed into the land. 'Here may be thought that the reigne of the Normans and Frenchmen over the realme of England tooke end ; a hundred twentie two years after the coming in of the Conquerour ; for those that reigned after this Henrie the second we may rightlie esteeme to be Englishmen, because they were borne in England and used the English toong, customes, and maners, according to the nature and qualitie of the countrie.'*

The country remained at rest during the early part of Richard I.'s reign ; but after his departure for Palestine in 1190, the ambition of his brother John led to further broils, in which Windsor and Wallingford alone shared. For Earl John, after calling a meeting at Reading in 1191 of the nobles and clergy of the kingdom, and having vainly attempted

* Hollinshed.

to bring about a meeting with Longchamp, the 'Chief Justiciar' during the King's absence, at Lodden Bridge, 'a safe place near Windsor Castle,' followed him from that fortress to London, and there compelled him to resign his Custodianship of Windsor to Walter, Archbishop of Rouen, who had been sent by Richard to 'advise about the kingdom.' In his hands it remained for two years, when John, after attempting, through the instrumentality of Philip of France, to secure his brother Richard's prolonged captivity in Austria, assembled an army 'principally of Welshmen and foreigners,' and stormed it. The Welsh, the relics of the subdued Celtic tribes, were largely employed by him in the troubles that followed. Returning eastward to the lands whence their forefathers had been driven, they came as a reactionary wave to check the turbulent uprisings of the last storm of conquest. At last an English King—for with all his faults John was that— had called upon an English people to resist the Norman French.

Richard's adherents rose against the usurpation of power by the Earl; and the Archbishop of Rouen and the Bishop of Salisbury besieged the Castle of Windsor and took it. Thereupon John fled to France, and the fortress, with those of Wallingford and the Peak, were held by Eleanor the Queen on behalf of her son Richard.[*] Eventually John became King, and, spending much of his time at Windsor, made many marches thence through Berkshire on his way to Reading, Odiham, and Freemantle. He seems to have lived well and studied. Reginald de Cornhill is directed to send 'two small casks of good wine to Windsor,' and also the 'Romance of the History of England.' These reached him by boat on the Thames, the ordinary mode of transit for merchandise; and tolls were levied both on foot-passengers and on the boats for the support of the bridges at Windsor, Eton, and elsewhere along the river. At

[*] Roger de Hoveden.

Christmas-tide, in 1213, the same Reginald was directed to provide abundant cheer, and this time 'twenty tuns of good and new wine for the household, as well Gascoigny* as French wine, and four tuns of best wine for the King's own use, that is to say, two of white and two of red wine were to be delivered before the day of the Nativity.' He had endeavoured on his accession to cheapen the price of wine, 'and so,' says the chronicler, 'the land was filled with drink and drinkers.' But his general character had estranged the Barons and alienated his people. Under the guidance of Robert Fitzwalter the conspiracy against the King, for which all Englishmen owe a debt of gratitude to Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, drew to a head, and 'the Armie of God and the holie Church'† took possession of London, and obliged the King to come to terms. He was at Odiham, on the borders of Berkshire, with a poor retinue, and rode thence to Windsor on the 10th of June, 1215. Five days later he went to a small island in the Thames opposite 'the field called Runimede,'‡ immediately beyond the south-east boundary of Berkshire, and signed near that ancient place of council, and within sight of our greatest Berkshire castle, the Great Charter of English liberty. The irresponsible power of the Norman invader was fast fading before the rising strength of the English people and the English nobles.

But the King was a traitor in this, as in all other actions of his useless life. He had little interest, and no wish at all, to hold the charter valid. Under cover of a papal Bull which condemned it, and with the assistance of foreign mercenaries, he endeavoured to regain his lost power. So the Barons called in the aid of France, and Louis the

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* Gascony wine, 30s. tun. French, $2\frac{1}{2}$ marks. Money = 15 times more than now.

† Holinshed.

‡ *Run mede*, council meadow (Introduct. 'Patent Rolls').

Dauphin landed at Sandwich, when all the castles near London surrendered to him, except Windsor and Dover. To the latter the Prince thereupon laid siege, while the Barons under the French Count de Nevers besieged the former. 'They were long there, but did little, and were in great jeopardy. The besieged made many fierce sallies, twice cutting the beam of their perriere.' Meanwhile, John amused himself by ravaging the country, and once came so near to Windsor that his men engaged with arrows. But no battle followed, and he returned by Sonning to Wallingford and Cambridge, followed for a time by De Nevers ; but soon the allied army returned to London, and did not again molest the castle.*

Beyond using it as a residence, John had done little for it. He seems to have repaired it in 1215, but after the last attack it remained dilapidated till the next reign. The feeble effort to raise the siege referred to above was King John's last sight of the towers of Windsor.

Though the war with the French and Barons did not at once cease, peace was concluded soon after the accession of King Henry III., the terms being arranged between Louis in person and the Dowager Queen on an island in the Thames near Windsor.

Henry III.'s reign was little calculated to lead to internal peace, and during the rebellion of the Barons much of the fighting took place round Wallingford. Windsor, garrisoned by the King's son with a foreign garrison, surrendered, and after that took no further part in the Barons' War.

Peaceful times on the whole followed the close of the dynasty of the Plantagenets, and little of serious military interest occurred in the county history during those of the Lancastrians, Yorkists, and Tudors. There was a skirmish at Maidenhead in the reign of Richard II., when Henry IV. attempted to cross the bridge, which was held by the Duke of Surrey ; and a battle was fought between

* 'Hist. des Ducs de Norm. et des Rois d'Angl.'

the same Henry, when Earl of Derby, and Vere, Duke of
Ireland, at the bridge of Radcot. These seem to have been
mere interludes in the general peace, or at least what
represented peace in those old days.

The Castle of Newbury as time went on ceased to have
any active value, and when the Tudors began to reign it
no longer existed; so that only Windsor, Wallingford, and
Donnington were now left to take part in the impending
Civil War.

Berkshire increased and prospered with more peaceful
days; and when, in the reign of the third Henry, the
great woodland that had reached from Windsor even to
Hungerford was disafforested, more land was brought
under cultivation, and numerous villages produced better
and more frequent roads. Civilization and learning
became more widely spread after the abolition of a
monasticism that had been useful in troubled times;
and with the increase of trade that characterised the
Elizabethan Era arose a powerful middle class, whose
wealth equalled or surpassed that of the nobles, and
whose political power in the State could now be no longer
suppressed. The age of the sword, in home matters
at least, had given way to that of the pen and of
commercial enterprise; and the absolute power of the
Sovereign and of feudalism was antagonistic to that
growing spirit of freedom which the Reformation had
inaugurated, and which the Parliament of the Commons,
as it grew in strength, fostered. So that during the early
days of the Stuart dynasty a spirit antagonistic to the
supreme authority of the Crown had been gradually
arising. The power of the nobles had been gradually
lessening as the country became less liable to invasion by
foreign Powers, and the mercantile class felt little disposed
to accept a rule that had in it the possible elements of
tyrannical government. The representatives of the people
in Parliament felt their power being undermined by acts

which owed their legality to the royal will alone, and to this they were not disposed to give unquestioning obedience.

Thus the tension between the opposing factions became dangerously strained, and it was soon apparent that any overt act on either side might lead to rupture. The cause soon arose. Charles I., despising Parliaments, had rarely called them together, unless for Supply ; and when he found they were unwilling to furnish him with the requisite funds, he resorted to arbitrary taxation to replenish his exhausted exchequer. Of all these taxes that of ' ship money' was most obnoxious. It was applied to all towns, whether inland or maritime ; and in Berkshire, not only was the county assessed at £4,000 to provide a vessel of 320 tons, carrying 120 men, but the towns of Windsor, Newbury, Reading, Abingdon and Wallingford were respectively assessed at £100, £100, £220, £100 and £20.

Against this grievous imposition the Grand Jury of the county appealed. It complained that the people had ' grievances of divers natures deriving their authority from Y^r Maj^e, but being directly contrary to Y^r Maties Lawe established in this your kingdom ;' and among them were enumerated ship money, the new taxes on coal, and conduct money, and the compelling freemen by imprisonment and threats to collect them.

It was not alone in this that the King personally prepared the storm that was to wreck his throne. The Reformation, with its simple form of worship, had taken a strong hold on the minds of the English people, as it had on all the Teutonic races of Northern Europe. They had learned to view with hatred the ritual and ceremonies of the Roman Church, to which the active hostility of Spain, the most bigoted of all its professors, had given increased vigour. Charles, under the influence of Laud—a Reading man by birth—had promoted a more ornate ritual, removed the communion tables to the eastern end of the churches,

and punished those who from conscientious scruples re-
fused to join such desecrations of the Sabbath, in their
opinion, as games and sports, which the King had given
open countenance to by renewing his father's edict per-
mitting similar recreations on Sunday to those who attended
church.

The Puritans became willing martyrs to these enact-
ments; and martyrdom in this, as in all other cases,
strengthened the cause and increased the power of the
persecuted. So by a continued series of injudicious acts
the breach widened, and Charles, proceeding to Not-
tingham, raised the Royal Standard, the signal for civil
war.

Nor was the popular party behindhand. The armies
that had been raised to put down the Irish rebellion were
ready for use and placed under the command of Essex.
The women of London 'gave up all their plate and orna-
ments of their houses, and even their silver thimbles and
bodkins, in order to support the *good cause* against the
malignants.'*

The war reached Berkshire in due course. In 1642 the
King retired by way of Reading from Brentford, and
thence to Oxford.

At this time Oxford was the royal head-quarters, and
garrisoned as outposts to this town were, in first line,
Farringdon, under Colonel Lisle; Abingdon; Wallingford,
under Colonel Blagge; and Greenwell House, under Colonel
Hawkins. Reading, under Colonel Middleton; Newbury;
Donnington Castle; and Hungerford were in second line.
On the other hand, Windsor was in the hands of the King's
opponents.

Opinion seems to have been fairly divided throughout the
county. When the Houses of Parliament decided that the
protestation to 'maintain and defend as far as lawfully I may
with my Life, Power, and Estate,' the Reformed faith, was 'a

* Hume.

shibboleth to discover a true Israelite,' it was ordered that
it should be made by every person holding office in the
Church or Commonwealth. The parishes of Brimpton,
Chaddleworth, Chieveley, Compton, Enborne, Frilsham,
Greenhaw, Hamsted-Marshall, Hamsted-Norris, the two
Ilsleys, Inkpen, Kintbury, Leckhamstead, Midgham, New-
bury, Peasemore, Shaw-cum-Donnington, the two Shef-
fords, Speen, Wasing, Welford, and Winterborne Danvers,
made the 'protestation;' and among the names mentioned
in this case are those of only seven Recusants. Again, the
shire and four boroughs returned in all ten members, and
of these two only are definitely specified as Royalists.

On the other hand, the landed gentry largely sided, here
as elsewhere, with the King. The list of those who had to
compound for their estates under the Ordinance of the Parlia-
ment of April 1st, 1643, shows thirty-one names from all
parts of the county, including those of Choke of Avington,
Sir Humphrey Foster of Aldermaston, and Christopher
Milton of Reading (the brother of the poet). They were
amerced in sums varying from Mr. Appleyard's £3 10s. at
Wargrave to Sir George Stonehouse's £1,460 at Radley.

It is probable, therefore, that here, as in other parts, the
towns and the trading middle-class on the whole took the
side of the Parliament against the landed interest, which,
from a survival of feudal feeling, joined the King. Many
other families, more actively employed than the above
probably, lost all they had, and only those who were not
so deeply involved were allowed to compound; while,
naturally at such a time, the Recusants for conscience'
sake, such as the Roman Catholic families of the Eystons
of Hendred, the Perkinses of Upton Court, the Brownes of
Great Shefford, and the Dancastles of Wellhouse, were
severely fined.

There is on the part of the King an amusing assumption
of ignoring the fact that there actually were in the county
those who did not side with him in the agreement made

between him and the 'Knights, Gentlemen, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County of Berks for the better provision and ordering of His Majestie's Army.'   For by this instrument the Sheriff and others 'on behalfe of *all* the inhabitants of the county' agreed to pay for one month, by way of loan, the sum of £1,000 weekly, to be proportionately laid upon all parts of the county except the hundreds of Riplesmere, Bray, Cookham, Benhurst, and Wargrave, which being in 'the Furest' were at the King's disposal.   The guarantors agreed to make good loss or damage occasioned by the misconduct of their men, and promised that there should be no manner of 'free quarter or billeting' without payment.   But all these wise and sound regulations, as will be seen, soon had to give way before the necessities and irregularities of a prolonged civil war.

It must have been a hard time for the county, what with Royalist demands and Republican requisitions.   In 1644, the Parliament appointed commissioners in their turn 'for raising money and forces within the county of Berks, and for maintenance of garrisons within the said county;' two of them were Berkshire men, but they did not attempt to levy in the names of 'all the inhabitants,' as the Sheriff had done.   They were Speaker William Lenthall, Master of the Rolls, of Besilsleigh; Sir Robert Pye, who later on joined in the attempt to restore Charles II.; Sir Benjamin Rudyerd, of West Woodhay, one of those Members of the Commons who were seized and imprisoned by Cromwell; Edmund Dunch, Member for Wallingford and for the county, who married Mary, daughter of Sir Henry Cromwell; Daniel Blagrave, of Southcote, Member for Reading and Treasurer of Berkshire; Richard Browne, Major-General of Berks, Bucks, and Oxon, who defended Abingdon during the war, and was Lord Mayor of London in 1660; John Packer, and Robert his son, of Donnington Castle; Cornelius Holland, Member for Windsor; and lastly, Sir Francis Pole, Richard White-

head, Henry Martin, Peregrine Hobby, Tanfield Vachell, and William Ball, most of whom were 'sequestrators' also.

The Earl of Essex was appointed to the command of the army of the Parliament, and assured the House that he would never desert the cause, 'as I have any blood in my veins, until this kingdom may be made happy by a blessed peace (which is all honest men's prayer) or to have an end by the sword.'

The campaign of 1643 opened on the 15th April by an advance of the Parliamentarians on Reading with 16,000 foot and 3,000 horse. The town was invested, batteries were built and armed ; but Major Vavasour, making a premature effort to storm the defences, was beaten back on the 22nd April. About this date the King, with forty-five troops of horse, nine regiments of foot, together with dragoons and artillery, attempted its relief, moving first from Oxford to Wallingford. He marched thence in two columns ; the right, under Colonel Ruthorn, on Reading, the left, led by himself, on Caversham, intending to re-concentrate before the beleaguered city.

They found the enemy ready to receive them, having enclosed their siege works so as to prevent their being taken in reverse ; and turning part of their siege artillery on their assailants, they made a vigorous offensive move-ment against the relieving army, one portion of which was trying to force the bridge at Caversham. Both attempts failed, that at Caversham with heavy loss, though supported by the fire of some twenty-four pounders; and the Royalists therefore fell back on Oxford, where the garrison of Reading, after its surrender later in the year, joined it. The Royalist soldiery were robbed to some extent when leaving the town, a proceeding that bore evil fruit ; for 'whether this, or the unruliness of the common soldiers, produced a breach of the articles, it was the origin of, and became an excuse for, mutual injustice during the continu-ance of the war, and particularly at the surrender of

Bristol.' Reading remained in Parliamentary hands until after the first battle of Newbury.

Governor Blagge of Wallingford showed little courtesy to his opponents. Though when Earls Lindsay, Holland, and Bedford came to him on their way to see the King at Oxford, with the view of joining his faction (which they did not do), he received them with all honour ; on the other hand, he kept waiting outside his gates, and afterwards received most haughtily, those members of the Lords, Commons, and Scottish party who had been deputed by the Parliament to consult his Majesty as to terms of peace.

The principal scene of action had in the meantime shifted to the west. There the armies of the King had triumphed, for Waller, who had been sent to check the Royalist successes, was beaten at Lansdown and Devizes, and had to fall back on Bristol. This town fell to Prince Rupert in July ; and while Waller was allowed to retire to London, the Royalist army, which Charles himself had joined, then sat down before Gloucester, which was held by Governor Massey. It was the only place in the west which now held a Puritan garrison, and the continued success of the enemy had so alarmed the Parliament, that Essex hurried to the relief of the beleaguered town ; but when, on his approach from London by Colnbrook, Aylesbury, Chipping Norton, and Stow-in-the-Wold, the Royalists raised the siege, he, feeling himself deficient in artillery, attempted to return to the capital.

This led him back to Berkshire, as he evidently wished to place the Thames, and possibly the Kennet also, if necessary, between him and his opponent. But Charles forestalled him. Moving on 'inner lines,' he reached Newbury, and, occupying the low ground on the south side of the town, was on the flank of the Puritan General's line of march if he attempted to pass him by the road over the Wash and Greenham Common. Thus was brought about the first battle of Newbury, on the 20th September, 1643.

The Earl of Essex was by no means deficient in military skill, and probably a more dashing leader would not, in those early days of the war, have done so much as he to create the fighting weapon from which the 'new model army' was afterwards formed. His men, though half trained and ill disciplined, had made an excellent march so far ; but their rear-guard had been harassed from Brackley to Prestbury by the Royal cavalry. He wasted his men in no slight encounters that could be avoided ; and so gave them confidence, and, by small successes, increased their self-consciousness. Thus, coming to the south through Circencester by night, he surprised a small force there, and, for the second time since he left London, taught his men the lesson that they could fight and win ; and when, after leaving Swindon, he was three days later, in his turn, attacked on Aldbourne Chase, he practically lost nothing but the 'loot' from Cirencester, which had to be left behind ; while, on the other side, the Marquis de Vieuville was slain. It is possible that the undoubted presence of the enemy in the neighbourhood made him abandon any idea, if he had formed one, of reaching London by the road north of the Kennet ; and in this case that between the Kennet and the Enborne was the only other available.*

He reached Hungerford on the 19th September, and moved by Kintbury toward Enborne ; where, finding that the Royalists were in possession of Newbury, he prepared for battle. His position was a strong one. His flanks rested safely on the Enborne and Kennet ; near Hamstead-Marshal, on a good road, was a secure place for parking his cumbrous train ; and, more than this, with a quick eye for the tactical value of ground, he had pushed forward his left centre to occupy the rounded spur in front of Skinner's Green, whence a battery could 'command all the plain before Newbury.' Then Essex, in command of

* 'Battles of Newbury,' p. 7.

the left wing, while Skippon led the right, waited quietly
for daybreak.

> ' And you that know the gains at Newberry !
> Seeing the General, how undauntedly
> He then encouraged you for England's right !
> When Royal forces fled he stood the fight.' *

Charles had reached Newbury from Evesham by North-
leach, Farringdon, and Wantage ; and, during his march,
had sought to harass and delay that of his opponent by
the cavalry action under Rupert at Aldbourne.   Having
encamped in the fields south of the town, he must either
have allowed his adversary to pass by along the high
ground of the Wash Common, or, taking the initiative,
have attacked him.   He decided on the latter course.

Advancing his right wing against the strong position
occupied by Essex's left—all the stronger for such troops
as his because it was rendered intricate by hedgerows, and
therefore better suited to steady trainbands than mounted
cavaliers—he threw forward his artillery on the high ground
of the common, and gradually extended his line of battle
down the southern slopes of the Wash.   His guns may
have been entrenched on the common the night before, but
this seems doubtful.   There were numerous independent
leaders who fought under the Royal banners without any
special command, and among these were Lords Falkland
and Carnarvon, who fell upon the field ; but Lord Forth
held supreme command under the King, while Sir Nicholas
Byron and Prince Rupert 'ordered' the infantry and
cavalry respectively.   The offensive movement of the
Royal right had been covered and protected by an advance
of Rupert's cavalry.   Ascending the slopes they had turned
sharply to their right, and, losing all control, charged with
desperate ardour and impetuosity against the steel-clad
pikemen.

The King's guns were masked by this wild advance, and

* ' Battles of Newbury,' p. 23.

here Falkland fell. But the days of individual fighting were fast passing away, and giving place to the combined action of bodies of troops working to a common end. All the foolish dash of 'officers flinging off their doublets in bravado, and leading on their men in their shirts' against cold shot and bright steel, must fail in the long-run if the infantry will but stand firm. And so these Royalists found. There is something almost pitiful in the boyish enthusiasm of these brave cavaliers when the results of their efforts are considered. Beyond the temporary forcing back for a very short distance the enemy's left centre, they influenced the fight not at all. For 'the city red and blue regiments,' moving from the right, ascended the southern slopes.* Their 'serried lines stood undaunted and conquerors against all, and like a grove of pines in a day of wind and tempest, they only moved their legs, heads, or arms, but kept their footing sure.' This counter-attack, this 'offensive return' by Skippon, was made on the broken or disordered centre of the King's line of battle. By the mere effect of marching forward now it had cut the army in two, exposing its severed fractions to flank attacks unless it fell back. So fall back it did, beaten.

It had totally failed in its proposed effort. It had moved from Evesham to defeat Essex, or at least prevent his march to London. It had done neither, and it had suffered severely, more especially in great leaders and chiefs ; even the field was left to the enemy, for the cavalry had crossed to Speen, and the infantry had retired within the town. Besides Falkland, the Earls of Sunderland and Carnarvon had fallen ; and it was related, even as late as the early part of the last century, that there were those then living who had seen the latter, before the battle, riding gaily with his drawn sword through Newbury streets, and laughingly taking measure of a gate, through which the Parliamentary generals were to be led when made prisoners, to

* ' Battles of Newbury,' p. 32.

see if it were wide enough to take 'their horns.' But they were as little likely to surrender without a fight as any Royalist in Newbury; they were of the same English stuff, and so the Earl found, for he was brought back the next day dead, carried across the back of a horse 'like unto a calf.'

The battle was practically lost, and so, too, was Falkland, the Secretary of State. He was the one man who seems to have felt in all its force the evil of the Civil War ; and his honesty and straightforwardness in opposing the detested tax of ship-money shows he was no mere partisan. His pitiful cry for 'Peace' shows with what deep regret he himself had drawn the sword. No one more sorrowfully recognised the extreme divergence of opinion which left the opponents neither choice nor arbiter. He saw, but with no light heart, that there was no other way out of the tangle but to cut the Gordian knot. The disease of severe political disagreement had to be cured by cold shot and sharp steel, and Falkland was one of those who mourned over the painful need. But his sorrow and regret did not check him in his path of duty. He led his gallant troopers against the hedgerows, where Essex stood, with all the dauntless courage of one who feared not death, like a valiant gentleman of England. 'I am weary of the times,' he said on the morning of the fight, 'and foresee much misery to my country ; but I believe that I shall be out of it ere night.' So his presentiment was fulfilled, and his dead body, after resting a while in Newbury, was removed to Oxford.

Essex, too, on that hard-stricken field, in all the triumph of victory, felt it was not all joy, when, saddened, and looking over the wide-spread scene of carnage, he 'prayed fervently that peace might once more shine upon the land.'*

He was up betimes on the 21st, and steadfastly adhering to the plan on which he had determined, continued his march to London. He passed—though not unmolested,

* 'Battles of Newbury,' p. 41.

for some of Rupert's sleepless horsemen attacked him during the day 'in the narrow lanes about a mile and a half from Aldermaston'—by way of Greenham Common, Brimpton, Aldermaston, Padworth, and Theale, to Reading, where he rested for two days, and then proceeded by Maidenhead to Windsor and London.

The less critical Royalist papers and authorities claim the day as a partial victory to the King, as the field was left in his possession, and he personally busied himself there, the day after the battle, in seeing that the wounded were cared for. A cottage near Enborne became literally a 'Cottage Hospital,' and bears the name of 'the Hospital' still. Many of the dead were buried under two great mounds on Wash Common; though isolated bodies must have been interred just where they fell, or in the churchyard at Newbury.* When, finally, Essex had left Reading for London, the King re-garrisoned it, under Sir Jacob Astley; reinforced the Castle of Donnington, which was still under Sir John Boys; and then retired to Oxford, leaving also a garrison of infantry in Abingdon with orders to hold the place.

Nothing happened during the winter of 1643, except that Essex rejoined the forces collecting at Windsor, to be in readiness to assist Waller, who was preparing an expedition against Old Basing House. This started by way of Hartford-bridge Flats in the spring of 1644, but produced no result. The campaign had meanwhile shifted to the Northern Counties, and what Royalist forces could be spared were drafted thither. Hence, when again Essex advanced with 10,000 men on Reading, the King abandoned both it and Newbury, causing the fortifications of the former to be destroyed, and marched all his available troops by way of Compton and Wantage to Abingdon, and then to Oxford. The garrison of Abingdon did not await the arrival of the

* After the second battle, in the autumn of the following year, when the fight was hottest in the fields round Speen, most of the dead were buried in a 'large pit near the tower of Newbury Church.'

Parliamentary troops, but left the place. This town was of very great importance to the Royalists because of its proximity to Oxford, and from its position between the advanced posts of Farringdon and Wallingford; yet on the approach of Essex the garrison abandoned it without apparently sufficient cause; and first General Crawford, and then General Browne, assumed command of the town. Royalist Colonel Blagge of Wallingford Castle was made of more tenacious stuff; he showed himself a dashing and enterprising, if not always a successful, commander, and kept his soldiers' hands in by constant forays. Thus though Crawford, who was short of food, foraged 1,000 sheep from under the very walls of the Castle, his adversary, watching his opportunity, later on assailed a party of eighty horse that was marching to Aylesbury, under Crawford himself, with his troop of 120 men, and defeated them with loss. Blagge himself was wounded, but this did not check his ardour. Though a detachment foraging from Wallingford was assailed by Captain Tomlinson and driven back, another moving on Greenwell House, which was besieged, relieved it and forced their adversaries to withdraw. But Browne, stung by this reverse, himself advanced against it the following spring, and made the place surrender; its garrison then joined that of Wallingford.

Thus the early part of the year 1644 saw nearly the whole of Berkshire in the hands of the Parliament. Windsor, Newbury, and Abingdon held Puritan garrisons; and only Farringdon, Donnington, and Oxford those of the King. Matters had not been progressing for the Royal cause. The Scots and Roundheads had united on Marston Moor, and had there given battle to Rupert. They owed their victory to some extent to a man with a heavy face, an ungainly manner, but a stern enthusiast; who, as General Cromwell, was to share in the next battle in Berkshire, and, as the Lord Protector, to rule it afterwards, and England too. He had given proofs of military aptitude at

Gainsborough the year before, and now made another mark as a bold leader. But it was indirectly owing to the second battle of Newbury that he assumed a definite position; for after it came that quarrel with the Earl of Manchester, which, among other things, led to the formation of the 'new model army,' that terrible weapon which in strong Cromwell's hands was to smash in pieces the armies of the second Stuart.

The battle was brought about in this manner. Waller having been defeated in the Midlands at Cropredy Bridge, his army, as an offensive force, practically ceased to exist; so Rupert had it all his own way there. Essex, too, who had moved against the Royalists under Maurice in the southwest, was cooped up in Cornwall by the combined forces of Maurice and the King; and though Balfour, with the horse, got away, and Essex himself escaped to Plymouth, Skippon was obliged to surrender with arms, artillery, and baggage. Thus the gleam of sunshine that had followed the Parliamentary cause after the raising of the siege of Gloucester disappeared. The relics of Waller's army were reorganized, and, joined with that of the Earl of Manchester from the Eastern Counties, were to advance to the relief of Essex, while a force under Colonel Middleton was to harass Rupert if he moved southward to aid the King. On his way he was to reduce the stronghold of Donnington Castle.

The autumn of 1644 showed the forces thus distributed.

The King, returning from the west, was at Blandford; Rupert was collecting forces at Bristol; but the Royalist garrisons of Basing, Donnington, and Banbury were closely invested.

On the other side, Middleton had ineffectually attempted to storm Donnington, and had moved west, to be defeated and driven to Sherborne, whence he joined Essex at Portsmouth. The siege was then undertaken by Colonel Horton, Browne's Adjutant-General at Abingdon. Waller was at Andover, where, attacked by Charles, he

fell back to Basingstoke, and joined the main army at Reading. Essex, who had collected an army at Portsmouth, had also reported himself at Reading, and lay sick at Swallowfield, Manchester's headquarters. Cromwell, leaving Banbury, had also joined Manchester, who now had a large and well-appointed force under his command ; and, informed of the weakness of the King, prepared to advance against him.

Meanwhile Charles had marched to Salisbury, and thence by Andover, Whitchurch, and Kingsclere, to Newbury. This movement naturally raised the siege of Donnington. To relieve Banbury was the King's next care, and for this purpose a force was despatched thither under the Earl of Northampton. Basing had in the interim been gallantly relieved and reprovisioned by Colonel Gage, who had marched by way of Wallingford and Aldermaston, and then returned to Oxford, after a dashing skirmish, laden with booty and prisoners. Thus so far the Royalist plans had succeeded. The besieged places had been relieved ; and, though Rupert had not yet joined him, the King had concentrated all his available forces at Newbury. But the detachments he had made had seriously weakened him, and the delay in his movements had given his adversaries ample time to concentrate a force more powerful than his.

Hence it was that, though operating offensively until now, he was compelled to assume the defensive ; and taking up a position north of Newbury, facing chiefly north and north-west, he prepared to await attack. Manchester was quite prepared to try conclusions with him, and marching by way of Aldermaston, Padworth, and Bucklebury Heath, encamped on Clay Hill, overlooking the Royalist right wing at Shaw ; while, in London, 'shops were closed, the people rushed to the churches, and a solemn fast was ordained to seek the blessing of the Lord on the coming battle.'*

* 'Battles of Newbury,' p. 126.

The King's army, numbering about 13,000 men, was strongly posted. Its right, resting on the Kennet, was strengthened by Shaw House, held by Sir Richard Page, and by a force under Astley and Lisle at the passage of the Lamborne at Shaw village. There the houses were prepared for defence, with a strong body of horse and foot, under Sir Thomas Hooper and Sir John Brown, between them and the mansion. In reserve here was Colonel Thelwall with his Reading brigade ; and Sir Bernard Astley was also, in second line, occupying a house at the south-east angle of the park. Every building was occupied and fortified, and the hedgerows were lined with musketeers. The centre was rendered safe by the works at Donnington, which had replaced and surrounded the battered Castle, where Sir John Boys still commanded. In rear of it, in the fields between it and Newbury, the King, with the main body of the artillery, took post.

The left rested somewhat *en l'air*. Speen Hill, hastily entrenched, was held by the Cornish foot and the Duke of York's regiment, and five guns, under St. Leger ; below it, in the village, was Prince Maurice's main body, consisting of one brigade of horse and two brigades of foot and artillery.

Newbury itself was occupied by a strong detachment at its southern entrance, and detached posts were pushed out on the left to the fords on the Lamborne at Bognor and Boxford.

Frequent skirmishes took place as the Parliamentarians closed up. Fighting occurred on the 25th near Thatcham, and during a reconnaissance on the following day. Manchester had entrenched a strong battery on Clay Hill, and skirmishing took place between the light troops, the result showing the exceeding strength of the King's position on this flank. The centre was known to be too strong, owing to the works at Donnington, and hence it

was decided to despatch Cromwell and Waller on the afternoon of the 26th with the bulk of the force to move by Cold Ash, Prior's Court, Chieveley, and North Heath (where they would halt), and then, on the 27th, by Winterbourne Church and Boxford to Wickham Heath; whence they would face the King's left at Speen.

To cover this flank march, and to keep the enemy in ignorance of it, Manchester was to attack him vigorously at Shaw; and, when he heard the sound of Waller's guns, to push his assault to the very utmost.

Thus, on the 27th, at daybreak, he attacked the extreme right of the enemy by crossing over a temporary bridge, made during the night, at the foot of Clay Hill; but though there was no lack of bravery, the force was too small to effect any impression. Still desultory fighting was kept up during the day; until, at four o'clock, he heard the welcome sound of Waller's artillery brought faintly to him on the evening breeze.

Joyfully forming his men into two columns, he advanced against Shaw. The right was to attack the gardens and mansion itself, the left the village. The Puritans advanced with bravery and cool determination,* but though both attacks were pushed with the greatest gallantry, the steel-clad men fell back in some disorder, leaving a colour and two 'drakes' on the hard-fought field. Still, they had fully done their work. It was almost hopeless to expect to carry such strongly fortified posts by a frontal attack, and yet no other choice was left them. But though they failed to gain possession of the defences, they none the less detained there a very strong force, and at one time must have kept inactive the King's centre too.

Cromwell's movement had meanwhile been effectively completed. His march to North Heath, where he halted for the night of the 26th, had been entirely unopposed; but on passing over the high ground the next day, the

* Clarendon, iv. 548.

Parliamentarians were seen by the garrison of Donnington, and Sir John Boys sent a small party of cavalry to check them. They could effect little ; so that shortly after noon the enemy's artillery arrived within range of the Royalist position on Speen Hill, and by three o'clock the army had deployed for battle. Waller commanded in chief, with Skippon in charge of the infantry, and Sir William Balfour and Cromwell in command of the right and left wings of the horse. They extended apparently from Stock Cross across the Bath road to the valley of the Kennet; and, though their first attack was checked, reinforcements were hurried up, and soon the entrenchments were captured. The guns that had been lost in Cornwall were recovered ; and the soldiers, clapping their 'hats on the touch-holes, embraced them with tears of joy.'*

The cavalry pushed vigorously forward, and converted the retreat into a rout. The right wing, moving rapidly along the hill-slopes, debouched on to the open fields, and charged the reserve near the King, who, for a time, ran an imminent risk of capture. But the squadrons of Sir John Cansfield and Lord Bernard Stuart hurried to his assistance, and there fresh troops drove back the disordered Puritan cavalry to the cover of Skippon's pikemen and musketeers.

The left wing of the horse had not been idle. Though the guns of Donnington Castle are said to have opened fire towards this part of the field, they do not appear to have exercised any telling influence. Cromwell, on his advance, met with Benett's cavalry brigade, which formed part of the Royalist centre, and dispersed them ; but his disordered squadron were driven back by the Earl of Cleveland's brigade, under Lord Goring, and had, like Waller's cavalry, to take refuge under Skippon's infantry, who routed the assailants with loss. It is only another example of the effect of fresh squadrons on others

* Ludlow's 'Memoirs ;' from 'Battles of Newbury.'

disorganized by charging; and also on the fact that steady infantry have nothing to fear from the mounted arm. Throughout all this, the decisive portion of the action, nothing is more noteworthy than the cool, collected action of Skippon's infantry. Cavalry charges may disturb an enemy, but will not themselves win a battle ; and if vigorously attacked when in disorder, they are helpless to rally, except under the cover of the muskets of the infantry.

Night was coming on, and the battle was practically ended. Numbers had fled into the town of Newbury, and the rest had fallen back, covered by the Castle of Donnington, and the fortified houses of Shaw. The battle was a drawn fight as far as its immediate results went, but the loss to the Royalists had been severe ; they had been roughly handled on their left, and they had checked, without either routing or demoralizing Manchester's force. So the night was spent in re-organizing the scattered troops on both sides ; and the King, deciding on retreat, directed the infantry and cavalry, under the command of Prince Maurice, to march by Snelsmore Common and Compton to Wallingford and Oxford, while all the artillery and heavy baggage were left under the care of the garrison and guns of the Castle at Donnington.

The fight had been necessarily dislocated on the part of the Parliamentarians. Union was almost impossible ; and at the end of the day, their force at Shaw was ignorant of what had been the result of the turning movement on the Speen side. Still, to the Parliamentarians it was a practical success, and rightly so. They had not been defeated, and the enemy had left the field to them. Well might the Commissioners write (to the Derby House Committee), 'Wee desire to give God the glory of this victory, it being His worke, and upon His day.'

It was late on the morning of the 28th before any attempt at pursuit was organized, and it is difficult not to

convict Manchester of a supineness that was almost criminal. A rapid pursuit might have very seriously increased the demoralization of an army that had tacitly acknowledged itself beaten ; but it was only after the repeated and earnest solicitation of Cromwell that he, Waller, and Heselrige were permitted to take the cavalry, about 6,000 strong, and follow the retreating army.

They were too late to reach them that day, so they bivouacked in Blewbury, Hagbourne, Chilton, and Harwell, where they received an order for their immediate return. Thereupon the three Generals personally visited the Earl, and pressed for permission to push on ; or, at least, to be reinforced by 3,000 infantry, and retain the positions they then occupied.

Still Manchester refused, on the ground that the whole valley was impassable from floods ; and leisurely marching to Harwell on the 2nd and 3rd November, he there directed a general rendezvous on Compton Downs, and on the 7th returned to Newbury.

Meanwhile, a singularly ineffective attempt to gain possession of Donnington Castle had been made ; and Cromwell's opinion as to the advisability of holding the position on the Ilsley Downs was fully borne out by the return of the Royal army there on the 8th November, the day after Manchester had left. For the King had gone to Bath to meet Rupert after the battle ; and, with the troops there, had marched by Cirencester to Burford, meeting the Earl of Northampton with the force that had relieved Banbury, and returning with the whole to Oxford. Here the army was re-organized, and, about 11,000 strong, marched by Wallingford to Ilsley. Crossing the fords of the Lamborne at Donnington Mill, it took post in the fields between Newbury and Speen.*

The Parliamentarians had made entrenchments to cover the town, erected probably on what is now the ' Marsh ;' but

* ' Battles of Newbury,' p. 148.

they offered no molestation, and 'the King lay that night at Donnington Castle, and all the army about him.'* The next day he removed the Crown, Great Seal, and divers jewels and papers from the Castle ; and, taking away all the guns for which he had transport, once more bade adieu to the gallant Sir John Boys. He marched by Burford and Shefford to Lamborne, quartering his troops between that village and Wantage ; but, after a short rest, he pushed on to Marlborough and Tyfield.

Here it was decided to re-provision Basing, and to Sir Henry Gage was the mission entrusted. To support him the army moved to Hungerford ; and, the relief having been effected, Charles returned by Great Shefford, Wantage, and Farringdon, where he left the army and went to Oxford. He had thought of attacking Abingdon on the way, but had given up the idea ; but Rupert, left alone, tried it, and was beaten off ; and, when the army went into winter quarters, joined Charles at Oxford.

Manchester had remained idle. He moved out of Newbury in a half-hearted way, as if to interfere between Basing and Gage's relief-party by way of Kingsclere ; but hearing of the occupation of Hungerford, he fell back on Aldermaston, proposing to take that way of reaching Basing. But he withdrew the Parliamentary force instead ; and then moved leisurely enough by Padworth to Bucklebury.

Berkshire had suffered deeply in the campaign of 1644. The whole county was 'in a miserable condition ; hardly a sheep, hen, hog, oats, hay, wheat, or any other thing for man to feed on,' was left in all the district round.

One of the results of the second battle of Newbury was the quarrel that occurred between Manchester and Cromwell. The latter accused his chief of cowardice practically, in allowing the Royal army to escape with all its guns, and for refusing to allow him to pursue with his cavalry ; and,

* 'Battles of Newbury,' p. 149.

as has been shown, there is every reason for believing that the Earl had displayed want of vigour, to say the very least. Mutual recrimination tended to widen the breach ; until at length, by the ' self-denying ordnance,' Essex, Manchester, Waller, and others were compelled to resign their commands, and Fairfax became the head of the army. With him was still associated Cromwell. For when the former proceeded to Windsor to make arrangements for the formation of the ' new model army,' Cromwell, who, like the others, should have been deprived of his command, was met there by a ' dispensation ' prolonging his services forty days longer to intercept Rupert, who was marching to relieve the King at Oxford. Drakes and other ordnance were sent from Windsor to Abingdon, and Fairfax himself marched through Reading and Newbury on his way to Taunton, and again halted at Newbury on his return to besiege Oxford.

Thus, in May, 1645, Windsor, Abingdon, and Reading were in the hands of the Parliament, and Farringdon, Wallingford, and Donnington still in those of the King. Between the garrisons of these places there were many raids and skirmishes, and in these Governor Blagge, of Wallingford, that alert and daring soldier, took a leading part ; but, on the whole, the advantage lay with the King's enemies.

Colonel Baxter, who held Reading, advanced against Wallingford, but thought his chances of success small, and fell back again. Captain Barker, of Wallingford, pursued him with his troop of 120 horse, and defeated his rearguard, taking thirty prisoners ; so Baxter turned at bay and took him prisoner with his spoil, and twenty-five men and fifty horses beside. Then Blagge, picking up a reinforcement at Donnington, made a dash at Kintbury, to return with a loss of twenty men and horses ; and Colonel Lowe, of Wallingford—there being a party of Parliamentarians in the vicinity—was next despatched to defeat it,

to be again beaten by General Browne, of Abingdon, with a loss of fifty men.

Colonel Barkstead became Governor of Reading in due course, and was nearly captured by one of Blagge's foraging parties. This restless Royalist at times sought for even more active work, and commanded the first tertia of the third brigade in the King's army in Cornwall. While he was away, Cromwell's horse defeated those of the Earl of Northampton at Islip ; but a troop was sent from Wallingford, joining one from Farringdon and another from Oxford, only to find that astute general had gone. One of the most remarkable points about this extraordinary campaign is the want of union between the forces, and the general inactivity of the armies after success. Though Manchester had fairly beaten Charles at Newbury, he seems to have allowed him, none the less, the free run of the district. Whether from policy or fear, he did not interrupt him in removing the guns from Donnington, or disturb Gage's march to Basing. Blagge, as we have seen, was also able to march to Kintbury and return. In fact, the prolongation of the war was due entirely to these errors. Cromwell alone seems to have recognised the necessity of striking hard and striking quickly.

No two places exercised a greater influence on the war than Basing and Donnington. The former, Cromwell's energy had seized and destroyed. After three days' fierce fighting he could thank God that he ' had given a good account of Basing,' and it was his influence that led to the final siege of Donnington by Colonel Dalbier. Dalbier was used to hard knocks ; he had been wounded in Newbury fight, and again from a musket-shot fired through a loophole at Basing. In November, 1645, he planted himself before Sir John Boys in the meadow that still bears his name, and in March, 1646, had given a sufficiently good account of Donnington too. For it fell, notwithstanding the brilliant defence of its most gallant Governor ;

and John Boys, as loyal a man as ever followed the banner
of the King, marched out with all the honours and courtesies
of war.

In what a state the country must have been! Peaceful
people were torn from their homes, and kept for ransom
by each side.

Colonel Ball, writing to Speaker Lenthall, says, 'That
which exceedingly affects me is the continual clamour of
the soldiers at Newberry, and country people thereabout;
that the soldiers having almost starved the people where
they quarter, are half starved themselves for want of
pay, and are becoming very desperate, raging about the
country, breaking and robbing houses and passengers, and
driving away sheep and other cattell before the owners'
faces.'* Both money and provisions were wanting. The
commonest complaint of the Parliamentary chiefs to the
Government was that the pay was considerably in arrears.
Thus forced contributions had to be levied by both sides,
and the unhappy folk had to contribute as well in coin
as in kind. 'Some of the soldiers were driving away the
sheep of Andrew Pottinger, of Wolhampton, a freeholder
of £60 per annum, a very considerable man for the Parlia-
ment, having a wife and six young children; who endeavour-
ing to secure his sheep, the soldiers struck him on the head so
that he became presently speechless, and dead within four
hours, to the great grief and sorrow of the neighbourhood.
Another party of nyne soldiers, armed with muskets, came
yesterday to the house of Mr. Ilsley, of Beenham, and
broke open his door, to the great affright of his wife, he
being absent, and hearing of it, got together his neighbours
and so beat the soldiers that they were all wounded, and
not able to return to their quarters.'*

The burden of war was felt by all classes, and instances
of violence might be indefinitely multiplied.

Sir Humphrey Foster, of Aldermaston, was dining quietly

* Tanner MSS.

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with his friends, when a party of troopers, headed˙by three
officers, broke into the house and carried away the valuables
and eight horses. Even friendly towns suffered. For 'these
grateful Rebells .... to make their accompt just, they
took a farewell survey of their deare Society at Newbury,
and for a Farewell plundered the towns most equally,
leaving them to contemplate the Reward of Rebellion, which
is to be used worse by those for whose sake they have been
most seditious.' This was attributed to the 'Redding
forces,' who acted in 'a most deplorable manner, and that
honest old Sir Francis Knowles, the ancientest Parliament
man in England, had much prejudice done to his houses
and their tenants in January, 1643.' The want of an
organized system of supply and transport threw the whole
burden of supporting the war in these respects on the civil
population. The evils were confined to neither side in
particular; and the soldiers, being but human, were com-
pelled to forage for their own subsistence. It was one of
the unavoidable evils of war conducted on unscientific
principles.

Trade was necessarily paralyzed. Carriers from London
to Wiltshire, after entering into a composition with Sir
John Boys at a charge of £3 a waggon, were captured and
recaptured by other officers, and had to pay each time.
On another occasion a party of clothiers, on payment of
£400, receiving a safe-conduct from Governor Lloyd of
Devizes, were seized and taxed by the Commandant at
Donnington to the same amount; to be again stopped at
Wallingford, and mulcted £10 a bale. Verily these were
troubled times for quiet traders, and it was time the war
should cease.

The King had been busy, and, at first, successful in the
north; while Fairfax, from Newbury, had laid siege to
Oxford. When Charles advanced the siege was raised;
Naseby was fought, and the King then returned to
Oxford. The brave Sir Henry Gage had been mortally

wounded at Culham during a sortie from Abingdon ; and this was not the only heavy loss that Charles could mourn. Soon the Western armies of the Royalists were defeated also, and Bristol, with Rupert, fell. It was Fairfax who had done these things, and he was returning to capture Oxford, where the King had taken refuge ; whereupon his Majesty fled to Scotland, and the war was practically at an end. Wallingford and Farringdon were now the only towns in Berkshire in Royalist hands. The latter, held by Sir Marmaduke Rawdon, had been unsuccessfully attacked by Cromwell, though its church tower had suffered ; and in a skirmish shortly after at Radcot Bridge he took Colonels Littleton and Vaughan prisoners. The great house of Farringdon had been defended by Sir John Pye against a force led by his own father-in-law, Colonel Hampden. But at length it, as well as Oxford, surrendered ; Wallingford alone finding, in Colonel Blagge, a hero as determined as Sir John Boys of Donnington, for that Castle was the last fortress in Berkshire to surrender to the Parliament.

In due course the King was tried and beheaded ; and one Berkshire man at least, Samuel Fell, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, and Rector of Sunningwell, is said to have died of grief when he heard of his royal master's execution.* Donnington Castle was in ruins, that of Wallingford was dismantled ; and thus, with the Civil War, two more of the Berkshire fortresses, to all intents and purposes, ceased to be.

Never was there a political struggle in which family had been divided more against family, or where men had more frequently changed sides. Of the Percys of Northumberland, Lord Henry had joined the King, while his elder brother, the Earl, was for the Parliament. Lord Holland changed from Parliament to King, and back again, and then joined in the abortive rising in favour of Charles II. at Kingston-on-Thames, the last blow struck in the Civil

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* ' Hist. Marlborough.'

War.   Captain Charles Fleetwood had remained a staunch
Republican, marrying Cromwell's daughter, Ireton's widow ;
but he was instrumental in bringing about the resignation
of Richard Cromwell, and thus paving the way for the
return of Charles II.   Middleton and Massey both became
Royalists eventually, notwithstanding the share they had
taken with the opposite side ; and there are numerous other
names, besides these, of men who fought in Berkshire,
who had a similar difficulty in making up their minds.
The sequestrators of the 'Delinquents'' estates were
generally Berkshire men.   They were Sir Francis Pile,
Member for the County, son of the first Baronet, who had
been created by Charles I. ; Sir Francis Knollys, son of
Queen Elizabeth's treasurer, who held the farm of Battle at
Reading, lived in the Abbey House there, and was Member
both for the County and the Borough at different times ;
Peregrine Hoby of Bisham ; Harry Marten, the regicide,
from Longworth, near Farringdon, who was at one time
Member for the County and Governor of Reading ; Roger
Knight, of Greenham, who joined in the last siege of
Donnington ; Henry Powl, of Shottesbrooke ; Thomas
Fettiplace of Fernham, near Farringdon ; and Tanfield
Vachell, of Coley House, Reading, Member for that
Borough in 1645.   The latter was another instance of
apparent political inconsistency ; for, though made Sheriff
of Berks in 1643 by Charles, he 'left his service and went
into rebellion.'   He came from a stern family.   For ''Tis
reported in Reading an old story of Vachell, y^t he would
not suffer ye Abbot of Reading to carry the hay through
his yard.   Y^e Abbot, after many messengers, sent a Monk
whom Vachell in fury kill'd.'   He was forced to fly, and
his kin afterwards adopted the motto, ' It is better to suffer
than revenge.'

   The traces of the Civil War, however, passed away, and
the factions were soon practically reconciled, so that the next
uprising against the royal authority was distinguished by

little active violence. The Revolution of 1688 was almost a peaceful one, and Berkshire saw what little active hostility there was to be shown.

One of the most vigorous among the conspirators was Richard Lord Lovelace, who then resided at Lady Place. In the cellars of his house the meetings were held which resulted in bringing the Prince of Orange to English ground. When William landed at Torbay, on the 5th November, 1688, his small army, superior in discipline, though inferior in numbers to that of the King, was slow at first in gaining active adherents. One of the first of the nobles to march to him was the Lord of Lady Place. With seventy followers, well armed and mounted, he rode as far as Cirencester without opposition. But the militia met him there, and after a sharp skirmish he was overpowered, made prisoner, and sent to Gloucester Castle.

It was the first blood shed in the struggle, and it was shed by Berkshire men; while the 'first peer of the realm who made his appearance at the quarters of the Prince was James Bertie, Earl of Abingdon,' a Berkshire peer.

Meanwhile James had joined his army at Salisbury, and was disposed to move towards Exeter, which his adversary had occupied; but doubtful of the result of the coming struggle, and alarmed at the defection of his nearest friends, he left the army, and returned by way of Wallingford and Windsor to London.

The 'Eastern Counties were up.' The people of Gloucester had released Lovelace of Lady Place, and he, with an irregular, half-armed, but enthusiastic following, had entered Oxford in triumph.

William followed nearly the same route as James, and passed across Salisbury Plain, near Stonehenge, to Hungerford, which he reached on the 6th December, putting up at the Bear Inn for the night. Here he met the Commissioners appointed by the King, and then went to Littlecote, riding to Newbury on the 11th December. His advanced troops

reached Padworth, and then went on to Reading; the rest of the army marching from Newbury by Farnborough, West Ilsley, the 'Golden Mile,' near Hendred, to Drayton, and reaching Abingdon on the same date.

Only insignificant skirmishes had attended the Prince's progress, one being at Reading, which had been garrisoned by Irish troops, who, from their religious sympathies, were adherents of King James. A party of these, 500 strong, attacked some of the Orange light troops at Hungerford on the day on which William entered that town; but they were roughly handled.

Later on, these same Irish dragoons so exasperated the people of Reading by their threats of pillage and massacre, that they sent to the Prince of Orange requesting help and protection. Thereupon 300 troopers marched to the town on the 9th December; and, after a brisk engagement in the market-place, the King's party was defeated, their opponents losing a few men, and the only officer killed during the war. As it appears by the registers of St. Giles's Church, he, with eight 'King's soldiers,' and one of the party of the Prince of Orange, was buried in the yard of that church, which then stood on the very outskirts of the place.

James had fled from London on the 11th December, and his army was dispersing too. William's army had moved by Wallingford and Henley; but as there is a tradition of a slight skirmish at Twyford, it is also possible the march may have been covered by the advance of a portion of the Reading garrison in pursuit of the Irish dragoons which they had driven out from Reading.

These Irish troops had apparently purposed to defend Maidenhead; but the townfolk beat a Dutch march by night, and they fled in confusion, leaving their guns and ammunition behind. And so, to what for the time being became a national air, to the tune of 'Lillibulero Bullen a la,' William of Orange passed on through Windsor to London, and became King.

With the Civil Wars terminated the military history of Berkshire. One by one its castles did their work, were demolished, and disappeared from active life. Now but fragments of its existence, they shared in its upgrowth; and round them rallied some of the most stirring events that the national records can show.

In place of a feudal fortress has risen the barrack towers of a regiment of Berkshire men in the depôt at Reading; and the gallantry of those who fought on either side round the weather-beaten stones of Donnington has descended, we may feel sure, on those who now represent the military spirit of the county. The cry of 'No surrender!' which Boys and Blagge had raised, was echoed on the disastrous day at Maiwand when the colours of the 66th Regiment of the Line—the Berkshire Regiment—fell, after a most gallant resistance, into Afghan hands.

But in not only these soldiers of the line has the spirit of old days lived; for Berkshire Volunteers, Berkshire Militia, and Berkshire Yeomanry show that the fighting spirit still exists among us, and, if dire need arose, would blaze afresh.

CHAPTER VII.

ITS MONASTIC AND ECCLESIASTICAL LIFE.

IT was not only in the castles which overawed and kept down the rebellious spirit of the land that the Norman influence was felt. From policy perhaps, and partly from the gradual growth of priestcraft, the Church also, as well as the State, acquired increasing power over the people and their possessions. Great monasteries were founded, and grew rich. Churches of noble architecture replaced the ruder Saxon structures, or rose where none had been before; and Berkshire in those mediæval days revelled in monasticism, with all its attendant merits and demerits.*

Reading and Abingdon stood in the list of the twenty-seven mitred Benedictine Abbacies of England; Hurley Priory, of the same religious order, was founded as a cell to Westminster.

The Augustine Monks, called Canons Regular, or St. Austin's Canons, held Poughley Priory, erected on the site of a hermitage by Ralph de Chaddleworth in 1160, and Sandleford Priory, built by Jeffrey, Earl of Perch, and his wife Maud, about 1205.

The Knights-Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, whose duty it was to provide for pilgrims to

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* In the 'Notitia Monastica' as many as thirty-five monasteries are mentioned as existing before the Reformation, and many had been destroyed when the alien priories were abolished.

the Holy Land, and who were established in England by Jordan Briset about 1108, had 'Commanderies' at Brimpton and Greenham.

The Grey or Franciscan Friars, who were established at Canterbury as early as 1224, had a house and a convent at Reading; and the Maturins, or Friars of the Holy Trinity, who came to England in 1224, established a monastery at Donnington.

The Preceptories of the Knights-Hospitallers have left little or no actual trace.* But in a deed preserved in the library at Valetta, there is a report by Philip de Thame, Prior of the Hospital in England, to the Grand Master of the Order, Elyan de Villanova, in 1338, in which the property of the Knights in this country is specified.

In the account of the Hospital at Jerusalem, its resources are given; and pensions are mentioned from the churches of Speen, Ilsley, Woolhampton, Ufton, Wasing, and Catmere.

The position of the Preceptory at Newbury is doubtful; but it may have been situated near the canal-wharf, where, probably, also stood the Castle of Newbury.† One of the fields near there long bore the name of the Hospital Mead.

The Preceptory at Brimpton, which seems to have been an offshoot of, and subordinate to, the other, is mentioned in the deeds as being at 'Shadeford.' Shalford is a house standing on the bank of the Enbourne, near the road from Brimpton to Aldermaston, and is even now surrounded on two sides by a moat. Remains of foundations are known to exist here; and in the churchyard of Brimpton Church was found a 'prick spear,' which may have belonged to the fourteenth century.‡ The church was one of their possessions, as well as the manor and village of Greenham, presented to them in the reign of Henry II. by Maud,

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* W. Money, F.S.A., in *Newbury Weekly News.*
† Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 254.   ‡ *Ibid.,* vol. i., p. 18.

Countess of Clare, and Gervase Paynell respectively.* Of
their history in Berkshire nothing is known, except that
in the reign of Henry VI. John Prendegast's name appears
among those of the Berkshire gentry as Preceptor of the
Hospital of St. John of Greenham.

The most ancient of the monastic edifices in Berkshire
is the Abbey of Abingdon, of whose Saxon history
mention has been already made. The Norman rule began
with Norman priests, and Athelhelm, the Normanized
Saxon, became Abbot. He succeeded to a rich inheritance ;
in Berkshire and Oxfordshire alone were 113 manors or
properties, of which at least thirty were in the former
county.

Thanks to the friendly feeling between the Abbot and
the King, Abingdon was little disturbed ; and, indeed, its
possessions were increased by the gift of the church at
Sutton from William himself. Athelhelm had to place
mercenary troops, which he hired, at Windsor when
the Castles of Oxford, Windsor, and Wallingford were
built. Robert d'Oyley, of Oxford and Wallingford, who
already owned Berkshire lands too at Ardington, was
a friend of his, and managed to obtain from him the
Tadmorton estate ; but for what equivalent, history does
not say. D'Oyley visited the monastery at Eastertide in
1087 with Miles Crispin of Wallingford, and Henry, the
Conqueror's son ; and here finally he was buried. It has
been asserted from this visit that Henry was educated
at the Abbey ; and, from his learning or the excellence
of the teaching, took the name of Beauclerc.

Abbot Athelhelm was a man of parts. Alfsi, the
King's bailiff in Sutton, cut wood in the Abbey grounds
at Cumnor and Bagley Wood ; whereupon the Abbot pur-
sued him on horseback, until he took refuge in the Ock,
up to his neck in water. On another occasion this same
bailiff took the Abbot's oxen 'to draw lead for the King's

* Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 254.

work ;' whereupon their redoubtable owner thrashed him with his own staff.

The Abbey was used as a prison also, if Hollinshed speaks truly ; for, according to him, here Egelwin, Bishop of Durham, was imprisoned and starved to death.

Rainald succeeded Athelhelm as Abbot ; and, like his predecessor, he was a favourite of the Norman kings, who confirmed the rights claimed by the monastery. He energetically set about the restoration and enlargement of the church, of which the tower had fallen, during some repairs, in the spring of 1091, though without injury to the brethren, who were on their way to matins. But he was in want of funds, so he insisted on the accurate payment of the tithes ; and, as churches had been consecrated at Kingston and Peasemore, hamlets of Worth and Chieveley, by Roger Bacheping and others, he forced them to own the Abbey rights, and to make a yearly acknowledgment to the rectors of the mother churches.

On his death, Rufus, who, for politic reasons, filled his exhausted coffers at the expense of the Church by refusing to appoint successors to vacant benefices,* appointed Broadbent to collect the rents of Abingdon ; but no Abbot was installed until 1100, when Henry I. gave Fabritius the vacant office ; and he was followed by Vincent, Ingulph, and Walkelin. The latter became Bishop of Winchester ; and to Fabritius is due the removal of the church, which stood ' more northerly, where now the Orchard is,' and who ' made the East part and Transept new, adorning it with small marble pillars.'

There was a break in the succession after Walkelin. Godfrey, Bishop of St. Asaph, held it *in commendam,* and then Roger, Prior of Bermondsey ; after which it was governed by Priors, until Alured, Prior of Rochester, was succeeded by Abbot Hugh. After him came William of

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* At his death one archbishopric, four bishoprics, and eleven abbeys were vacant.

Colne, and Robert de Hendred, the first to wear 'the mitre and pontificals,' on Trinity Sunday, 1268 ; and, during his reign, Henry III. held a court here. Nicholas de Culham, who built the parish church of St. Nicholas outside the Abbey gates, Henry de Tulford, John de Sutton, William de Cumnor, Richard de Boxford, Ralph de Hanney (all bearing names taken from the dependencies of the Abbey), Aschecdune, and John Saute, who was Ambassador at Rome in the reigns of Edward IV. and Henry VII., and who enlarged the church buildings, were successively Abbots of Abingdon. Geoffrey of Monmouth even has been asserted to have been one of them, and to have been buried in the Church.

Lastly, Rowland de Penthecost assumed the mitre in 1514, and twenty-five years afterwards surrendered it to Henry VIII. At that time its yearly value was £2,042 2s. 8d., worth in 1827, according to Cobbett in his 'Protestant Reformation,' as much as £40,842 14s. 2d. of modern money. He was allowed to keep the Manor of Cumnor until his death ; and, by some, has been accused of many crimes, and said to have amassed wealth enough to buy the manor. This had been used as an hospital for sick or convalescent Abbots of the Abbey, and was, in fact, their country-seat. It was bought after his death by Anthony Forster, Esq., described on the brasses of his gray-marble tombstone as 'amiable and learned, a great musician, builder, and planter.' He was a friend of the Earl of Leicester, to whom he left Cumnor Place by will, and it was said to have been with his connivance that 'Amy Robsart' died. It is a pity almost to destroy the romance that Scott has told, but whether she was murdered by Sir Richard Varney and Forster, or whether the whole of that story is false, she was undoubtedly the daughter of a *Norfolk* knight, and was married to Robert Lord Dudley at Sheen on the 4th June, 1550, in the presence of Edward VI. She could not have become Countess for

four years after her supposed death in 1560, when Dudley became Earl, nor have been present at Kenilworth when Elizabeth visited it eleven years later in 1575. Still, there seems little doubt that there was a suspicion of foul play attaching to the Earl. Naturally ambitious, and raised to the dignity of Master of the Horse, Knight of the Garter, and Privy Councillor, he may easily have been led, with his handsome person, to aspire to be the Consort of the Queen. Certain it is that, though, on the death of his wife, application was made, no inquiry into the case was ever entered into ; but 'among the reasons assigned to Elizabeth why she should not marry him, by Cecil—afterwards Lord Burleigh—was this, that he is infamed by the death of his wife.'[*]

Little remains of the low quadrangular fourteenth-century edifice surrounding a small courtyard, but a portion of a wall and three arches adjoining the church-yard. Its painted windows are now in the church at Witham, where also, in the churchyard, is a gateway from Cumnor, still bearing the motto, 'Janua vitæ verbum Domini,' and which once had, in addition, 'Antonius Forster, 1571.' A statue of Elizabeth which stood at Cumnor was moved to Hinksey. Towers it had none to speak of, and its apartments were not spacious ; but Scott's story is none the less beautiful, and

> ' Full many a traveller had sigh'd,
>   And pensive wept the Countess' fall,
> As wandering onwards they espied
>   The haunted towers of Cumnor Hall.'

Here, at any rate, Abbot Rowland finished his career ; while the Abbey he had ruled, and which had an income of £2,042—a large sum in those days—passed to Sir Thomas Seymour, and then to Sir Thomas Wroth. There was another 'Rectorial House,' with painted windows and decorated tracery, at Sutton Courtenay, which belonged

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[*] Lodge ; quoted in Murray's ' Handbook.'

to the Abbot, and was built in the reign of Edward III., but of this nothing is recorded.

The Abbot's pension was £223; that of the Prior, £22; and those of the twenty-three other monks, for there were twelve monks and twelve lay-brethren, varied from £20 to £2 13s. 4d.

The western Perpendicular gateway of the Abbey with its statue of the Virgin, and part of the Refectory with its open roof, Decorated window, and Henry III. fireplace, are all that is left of the fabric that Leland describes as magnificent. Its eastern portions and cruciform church were of Norman work; and the latter is said to have been 560 feet long, and supported by twenty-four columns on each side. It was crenellated, that is, its walls were embattled by a license of Edward III. in 1380; and the west front was due to the energy of Abbots Ashecdune and Saute in the fifteenth century. It was the oldest of the Berkshire monasteries, though not the greatest.

The Benedictine Priory of the Holy Trinity at Wallingford was the next in order of foundation, and owed its existence to the pious misgivings of Robert d'Oyley. In the Abbacy of Richard, during the reign of Henry I., the Priory became a cell of St. Albans, and so the Black Monks of Wallingford became subordinate to the greater monastery. It has been attributed to Geoffrey, the King's Chamberlain, but there is only evidence that he was at one time connected with lands which the Priory afterwards possessed.* It was rich in lands in 1160, when Joceline, Bishop of Salisbury, confirmed to it the churches of St. John, St. Martin, and St. Mary in 'Wallingford,' the Church of Hendred, and tithes in Moulsford, Cherseville, Dunituna, Erleia, Morton, and Sotwell. Grants were continually made to it, and among its many possessions was the Manor of Eastbury, in the parish of Lamborne. St. Mary's Chapel at Lamborne, built by John of Eastbury

* 'Hist. of Wallingford,' ii., p. 343.

in 1360, contains curious carvings of 'men blowing horns, and dogs chasing a hare, and also of fish, in contrast with caricatures of monks,' that may have been originally in the Priory of the Holy Trinity. Sir John died and was buried in the chapel with Agnes his wife, with the prayer, 'May God have mercy on their souls.' His descendant, also Sir John, added to it a 'Chapel of the Holy Trinity,' and was interred in it in 1485 under an altar tomb which bears his copper effigies. Legend has gathered round him. He is said to have 'been killed by a worm dropping into his mouth while he was asleep in an arbour,'* which his housekeeper tried to decoy away with a basin of milk; but it stung his lip, and so he died. The Priory has little or no history, and in 1525 peacefully surrendered to the King, to be granted with all its possessions to Wolsey. On his attainder it reverted to the Crown.

It stood apparently near the west gate of the town, near which foundations, tiles, and skeletons have been turned up; but the walls themselves were finally pulled down in 1723. Its annual value in Henry VIII.'s reign was £147 8s., equivalent now to £2,848 0s. 10d.

In magnificence and importance, the Abbey of Reading took first place. It owes its creation to Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom is due also that greater action, the promotion of the union between the Saxon and Norman lines. For Edith, or Matilda, the daughter of Malcolm of Scotland and Margaret, the sister of Eadgar Ætheling, had been brought up in the Hampshire Convent of Romsey, and had been forced to take the veil. She appeared before the King, her future husband, and complained with passionate pleading that her aunt the Abbess had forced her to the act. 'As often as I stood in her presence,' she said, 'I wore the veil, trembling, as I wore it, with indignation and grief. But as soon as I could get out of her sight, I used to snatch it from my head, fling it to

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* Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. i., p. 144.

the ground, and trample it underfoot. That was the way, and none other, in which I was veiled.' *

But Anselm absolved her, and she became Henry's wife. Thus he had great influence over the King. So 'Henry, by the grace of God, King of the English, and Duke of the Normans,' by the advice of his 'Bishops, Clergy, and other Lieges, for the salvation of my soul, and of King William my Father, and of King William my Brother, and of William my Son, and Queen Maud my Wife, and of all my ancestors and successors,' built 'a new Monastery at Reading in honour and to the name of the Mother of God, and ever Virgin, Mary, and of the blessed John the Evangelist.'

He endowed it with Reading itself, Cholsey, and Lempster (Leominster), and with manors at East Hendred and elsewhere; and gave its Abbots privileges such as none but independent Barons or the King himself possessed. 'The Monks of Reading,' the Charter states, 'their family (household) and effects shall be free from all gelt and toll and every other custom by land and water in passing over bridges and seaports throughout England.* And the Abbot and his Monks shall have all hundreds and places with soc and sac and tol and theam and infangenthef and utfangenthef and hamsoken, within borough in ways and paths, and in all places and all causes which are or may be, from their men and all their possessions, and from aliens forfeiting therein; and the Abbot and Monks of Reading shall within all their possessions have the whole cognizance of assaults and thefts, murders, shedding of blood and breach of the peace as much as belongs to the Royal power, and of all forfeitures.'†

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* 'History of Reading Abbey.'

† The terms herein used are thus explained in Mr. Albury's most able article on the Abbey, whence the information regarding it is chiefly drawn. *Gelt*, fine; *tol*, of merchandise; *soc*, authority or liberty to minister justice and to execute laws; *sac*, a royalty or

The Abbot was allowed a mint, being, therefore, 'a moneyer,' and was allowed the rare privilege of making knights.

'Abbots made two sorts of knights, the one superior, the other inferior. Those termed "Milites" could not be common soldiers, for they were made with many ceremonies, and the greater the ceremony the greater the honour. Thus Hereward, a nobleman, who long contended with William the Conqueror, was knighted by the Abbot of Peterborough; and William Rufus by Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. Abbots could not make them "nisi in sacra veste," which was their cope, for the adding more to the reputation of the receiver.'*

Relics accumulated as a matter of course. They added to the sanctity of the edifice, and increased the number of worshippers and therefore contributors to its coffers. The hand of St. James the Apostle enriched the Abbey reliquaries, and similar valuables followed. Thus by the Dissolution they were rich in them. There were, 'Imprimis, Twoo peces off the Holye Crosse; Saynt James hande; Saint Phelype scolle (skull); A bone off Marye Magdalene, with other more; A piece off Saynt

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privilege which a lord of the manor claims to have in his court of holding plea in causes of debate arising among his tenants and vassals, and of imposing and levying fines touching the same; *tol*, a liberty to buy and sell within anyone's own land; *theam*, a royalty granted to the lord of a manor for the having, restraining, and judging bondmen, bondwomen, and villains, with their children's goods and chattels in his court; *infangtheof*, a privilege granted to the lord of a manor to judge any thief taken within his jurisdiction; *utfangtheof*, a privilege as used in ancient common law, whereby a lord was enabled to call any man dwelling in his manor, and taken for felony in another place out of his fief, to judgment in his own court; *hamsoken*, the privilege of freedom which every man has in his own house, and it also signifies the right wherewith the lord of the manor takes cognizance of the breach of that immunity.'

* Hearne's 'Antiquarian Discourses.'

Pancrat's arme ; A bone off Saynt Quyntyn's arme ; A bone off Saynt Davyde's arme ; A bone off Marye Salome's arme ; A bone off Saynt Edward the Martyr's arme ; A bone off Saynt Hierome, with other more ; A bone off Saynt Stephen, with other more ; A bone off Saynt Blaze, with other more ; A bone of Saynt Osmonde, with other more ; A bone of Saynt Ursula scole ; A chawbone of Saynt Ethelwold ; Bones of Saynt Leodigarye and off Saynt Heremei ; Bones of Saynt Margarett ; Bones of Saynt Arval ; A bone off Saynt Aias ; A bone off Saynt Andrewe, and two pieces off his crosse ; A bone off Saynt Fredyswyde ; A bone off Saynt Anne, with many other. There be a multitude of small bonys &c. which wolde occupie iiii schets of papyre to make particularly an inventorye of any part thereof. They be all at your Lordeschyp's commaundments.' The final sentence is instructive. The disbelief in relics must have been of no new origin, to the educated classes at least, when the monastery was destroyed.

Its mitred Abbot had a seat in Parliament, and was the third in precedence in the kingdom, ranking after those of St. Albans and of Glastonbury, and he retained this privilege until the Dissolution. The monks had waxed fat and neglected their duties. Their number diminished ; they contracted debts ; the divine offices were insufficiently performed. So Edward I. stepped in and sequestrated their revenues charging the lay administrator, however, to provide the ecclesiastics with sufficient food and raiment. Abbot Nicholas de Quappelode exerted himself to pay off its debts, and succeeded in remitting £1,227 to the Caorsini money-lenders ; and also paid off 'one Alexander, a merchant and citizen of London, all the moneys due to him.'

No monastic edifice shared so largely in the history of England. Here Henry I., its founder, in 1135 ; his wives, 'good Queen Molde' and Adeliza ; his natural son Reginald, Earl of Cornwall, 1175 ; his daughter Matilda ; and

William, son of Henry II., 1156, were buried. Here, too, were married John of Gaunt to Blanche, daughter of Henry Plantagenet, in 1359; and Lord Maltravers, son of the Earl of Arundel, to Margaret, sister to the Queen of Edward IV., in 1464. King Stephen was here in 1140; Henry II., in 1163, and in 1164, when Archbishop Thomas à Beckett consecrated the Abbey Church, and again in the Easter of 1177; Henry III., in the Christmas of 1227, and in 1259, at the pleadings of the Courts of Justice of Michaelmas term; Edward III., during the great 'justing' of 1346; Richard II., in 1389, to be reconciled to his nobles through the intervention of John of Gaunt; Edward IV., when his private marriage with Elizabeth Woodville was made public in 1464; Henry VII., in 1486; and Henry VIII. with Catherine his wife, made the Abbey their resting-place when they visited Reading.*

Such royal progresses must have been heavy additions to the Abbey expenditure. Parliaments met here, such as those of Richard I., in 1191; of John, in 1213; of Henry VI., in 1439, 1451, and 1452; and of Edward IV., in 1466 and 1467. Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem, here had audience of King Henry III. to solicit his aid against the Turks, presenting him with the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Royal Banners of the city. Ecclesiastical councils, one under Legate John of Florence in 1206, and another under Archbishop Peckham in 1279, met to settle grave matters of the Church. In fact, the Abbey answered other purposes than that of a religious edifice. It was the place where travelling nobles and royal personages, besides mendicants and wayfarers, received relief and hospitality. It had to make some return for the privileges conferred on it, and these returns were costly.

But if the guests fared well their hosts fared no worse, if Fuller's story be true. He says that 'As King Henry VIII. was hunting in Windsor Forest, he either casually lost, or

* 'Proc. Berks. Archæol. Soc.'

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more probably wilfully losing himself, struck down, about dinner-time, to the Abbey of Reading, where, disguising himself (much for delight, more for discovery unseen), he was invited to the Abbot's table, and passed for one of the King's guard—a place to which the proportion of his person might properly entitle him. A sirloin of beef was set before him (so knighted, saith tradition, by this Henry), on which the King laid on lustily, not disgracing one of that place for whom he was mistaken. "Well fare thy heart," quoth the Abbot; "and here, in a cup of sack, I remember the health of his Grace your master. I would give an hundred pounds on the condition I could feed so lustily on beef as you do. Alas! my weak and squeezie stomach will hardly digest the wing of a small rabbit or chicken." The King pleasantly pledged him, and heartily thanked him for his good cheer; after which he departed as undiscovered as he came thither. Some weeks after the Abbot was sent for by a pursuivant, brought up to London, clapt in the tower, kept close prisoner, and fed, for a short time, with bread and water; yet not so empty his body of food as his mind was filled with fears, creating many suspicions to himself, when and how he had incurred the King's displeasure. At last a sirloin of beef was set before him, on which the Abbot fed as the farmer of his grange, and verified the proverb that two hungry meals make the third a glutton. In springs King Henry, out of a private lobby, where he had placed himself, the invisible spectator of the Abbot's behaviour. "My Lord," quoth the King, "present deposit your hundred pounds in gold, or else no going hence all the daies of your life. I have been your physician to cure you of your squeezie stomach, and here, as I deserve, I demand my fee for the same." The Abbot down with his dust, and glad he had escaped so, returned to Reading, as somewhat lighter in purse, so much more merry in heart than when he came thence.'*

* Fuller's 'Church History.'

Still, the Abbacy was important ; and when John Glover, Prior of the cell of Leominster, and Hugh Cook of Faringdon, the last Abbot of Reading, were required to resign their offices, it is a matter of little wonder that they offered some resistance. Hugh Cook, especially, 'was a stubborn monk, absolutely without learning.' Dr. John Loudon, who seems to have been the last head of the college of St. Nicholas, at Wallingford, and who certainly assisted in the spoliation of the monasteries, was employed here. He wrote of Abbot Hugh to Lord Cromwell that 'He desyreth only yr favour and no other thing, and I know so much that my Lord shall find him as conformable a man as any in thys realme, as more at large I will shew you at the begynning of the term by the Grace of God.' The same visitor writes on another occasion : 'I have requyred of my Lord Abbot the relycks of thys house which he schawyed unto me wt gudd will. I have taken an inventory of them, and have lokkyed them upp, behynd the high altar, and have the key in my keeping, and they be always redy at your Lordeschip's commandment. They have a gudde lecture in scripture daily redde in their Chapiter House, both in Englisch and Laten, to the wiche is gudde resort, and the Abbot ys at yt hymself.' The Abbot was a stubborn monk, if 'illiterate,' and stood firm. So Hugh Faringdon or Cook, 'the last Abbot of Reading Abbey, refusing to deliver up his Abbey to the visitors, was attainted of high treason on some charge trumped up against him ; and in the month of November, 1539, with two of his monks, named Rugg and Onion, was hanged, drawn, and quartered at Reading. This happened on the same day on which the Abbot of Glastonbury suffered the like sentence for the similar provocation.'

Then the building became a royal residence, frequently occupied by the Sovereigns, until the 'Great Rebellion' came. If the grand old Abbey began with a great Churchman, firm to do his duty to his country, despite of Pope or

cruelly extorted monastic vows, it ended with a determined one, who, in his poor way, was unable to see that ' the King could do no wrong.'   Hugh, the ' illiterate,' who died with what he called firmness, and the King obstinacy, had the courage of his convictions as much as Anselm, though the fates were against him.

Few monastic edifices could have been richer in extent, in wealth, or in decoration than this mighty Abbey.   At its Dissolution its revenues amounted to £1,938 14s. 3d. Like Abingdon, its Abbots had a country residence ; theirs being at Abbot's Place, near Cholsey, which was given to Sir Francis Englefield in Mary's reign.   Bere Court, near Pangbourne, had also been bestowed on them by the Bishop of Salisbury in 1230.   Near Burghfield Hill House, also, are the foundations of a brick building, known as ' Abbot's House,' which was used for a similar purpose ; and the Tudor Mansion of Bucklebury has been built round an ancient country-house of the Abbots of Reading.   But the monks, thoughtful for others, had set aside a house in Reading called St. John's House, or Hospital, for the destitute widows of persons in the town, who became nuns in this establishment.   It was suppressed by Abbot Thom in the reign of Henry VII., and with the Abbot's consent the building in 1486 was made the Grammar School.

It would be difficult to give a complete list of the possessions of the great Abbey; but it had manors at Cholsey, Blewbury, Hendred, Burghelbury, Greenham, Midgham, Cookham, Calthorp, Pangbourne, Basyldon, Shyningfield, Sonning (Bulmershe), the rectories of War-grave, and Reading town and borough ; rent in sundry places ; farms at Windsor Underore, Whitley, and Caled Mill, and the fishery of the Kennet ; the Rectory of Ben-ham, Tilehurst, Thatcham, Colley, and Whitley ; besides land in other counties, and pensions from St. Mary's, St. Giles', Englefield, and other churches.   Its buildings covered a large area of ground, and its land stretched

away as far as Sonning. The present 'Abbey Gateway' stood on the south side, and opened into a wide enclosure, formed by a wall extending behind the churchyard of St. Lawrence on the west to the margin of the road running parallel to the railway on the north, where it still exists, overlooking the low ground through which ran the Plummery Ditch; it then turned back towards the south by the side of the present gaol, forming the eastern wall, till it rested on the Holy Brook. From the east side of the present gateway, or near it, a wall seems to have run somewhat parallel to the eastern wall until it reached the Abbey mills upon the Holy Brook. There were also three other gates, one towards St. Lawrence Church.

Within the south-eastern portion of this area the principal building stood, the great church occupying the level of the plateau. It was cruciform in shape. The north transept stood apparently about where the Roman Catholic Church now stands; the south transept, with a double apsidal end, is still apparent; the Choir and Lady Chapel extended to the eastward between them, under the present gaol; and the nave extended to the west towards the Abbey Gate, across the bridge and road which now leads to the Roman Catholic Church. South of the south transept are the ruins of the Chapter House; and, between that and the Holy Brook, other buildings whose use is doubtful. But the south transept and Chapter House opened on the eastern side of the quadrangle which was surrounded by the Cloister, the side of which towards the Kennet was occupied by the refectory, and the western face towards the present gateway by the monks' dormitories. It remains a mere shell of its former glory. All the squared stone has been removed, exposing the inner flint rubble, which still retains its massive character. The bases of the pillars of the church, the restored south gateway, the almost shapeless ruins of the Chapel of St. Thomas of Canterbury behind the present Roman Catholic priest's house, the ruins

of the south transept, and the Chapter House, are alone distinguishable. Fragments of enriched Norman work are built into the bridge leading to the Roman Catholic Church, and one more perfect than the rest has been utilized to form its font.

Its stones have travelled far. Many are said to have originally been brought from Romano-British Silchester, and many have been removed from Reading to build the Hospital of the Poor Knights at Windsor, whither they were taken by water-carriage. There are entries in the records of its gradual destruction. 'Carpenters for viewing the roofes at Reading and Wallingford' received 12d. a day, as did masons for 'taking down the great stones of the dores and windowes of the Chappell of our Lady' there; but labourers for 'digging of Caen stone out of the windowes for the battlements in the new buildings' (at Windsor) received but 7d. per diem. Queen Elizabeth's charter to the Corporation of Reading grants them two hundred loads of 'fine stone from the Abbey;' and large quantities were removed by General Conway to build the bridge at Park Place, across the Henley-Wargrave road.

On the site of the ancient Hermitage of Clenfordemere, or Ellenfordesmere, in the parish of Chaddleworth, was erected in 1160, by Ralph de Chaddleworth, the Monastery of Poghley, or Poughley,* for Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine. It was dedicated to St. Margaret,† and between the priorhood of Robert in 1182, to the period of its dissolution in 1524, when John Somer

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* Spelt also Pochele, Pohhel, Pouhhthele, Poughthele, Pothele, Pocholhoe, Porchekela, Pogkill, Powshley, Poghele, Poghle, Poghly, Poghley, Poughly, and Poughley.—Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. ii.

† St. Margaret of England, who lived temp. Henry II., was a pilgrim to Jerusalem and Bethlehem, thence to Montserrat in Spain, and to the Shrine of Our Lady at Puy, in Velay. She died at the Cistercian Nunnery of Seauve Benoite, where 'her body is preserved entire.'— *Ibid.*, p. 56.

surrendered the house to the King, there were twenty Priors, none of whom seem to have been of great note. In the time of Thomas Sutton, who lived in 1469, the revenues amounted to £50 per annum, and these had reached the sum of about £71 10s. when the place was suppressed. Among other lands, it had received the Manor of Bagnor in Thatcham Hundred.* The usual privileges were granted it. It was exempt from tithes ; it, like Reading, was empowered 'to perform the Divine office in their church, with closed doors, when the land was under an interdict.'† It was well supplied in the time of 'John atte Hyde, Seneschal of the Priory of Poghle (Pougthele). In the larder were : 'liiii sides of bacon, xiiii quarters of beef, v bushels of salt, vii bushels of oat-flour, with iiii vessels for holding salt and flour, ii butcher's vessels for salting meat, and "trushing" pans. In the kitchen, besides a variety of utensils, there were chafing-dishes, brass plates (bound with iron), mortars, ladles, and three meat knives, of which one was old and weak (*vetus et debilis*). In the dairy there were viii cheeses, etc. In the barns there was an abundance of corn of different kinds ; and in the stables vi riding horses, vi farm ditto, xii oxen for draught, xii for the farm, also i bull, x cows and year-lings iv, 3 male and 1 female ; besides these there were 120 sheep, fowls, geese, hogs, etc.'

A curious instance of the absolute resignation, during the lives of the contracting parties, of their entire property occurs in connection with this monastery ; when Lambert of Farringdon and Matilda his wife, 'moved by the Divine Spirit,' renounced 'the world and worldly things,' and were supported by the Prior, while their son, William, became a monk of ' Pochele.' The indenture, made on the Festival of St. Peter's Chains in 1242, states that Lambert, son of Bernard, and Matilda, gave and insured to the Prior and convent, and to their church at Pohhel, ' all that

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* ' History of Newbury.'   † Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 52.

tenement which he has held in Faringdon with its appurten-
ances, and with all his chattels found in the said tenement
for a perpetual alms, saving the service of the feudal lords.'
For this they were to receive from the buttery, ' 16 loaves of
wheaten bread, which loaves they call *miches*, of due weight
according to the said house, and 8 loaves which they call
biss, likewise of just weight, and as many gallons of beer,
viz., 16 of the first and 8 of the second.' They were to have
their commons out of the kitchen, or two platters of porridge
of potherbs or pulse daily, or in default thirty shillings per
year; and they were allowed to have meat cooked by the
Priory cook. Twenty shillings a year was given them for
clothing, and two cows from the conventual herd, and
houses and 'coals' were furnished to them. In fact, they
used Poghley as a species of workhouse, and both saved
themselves trouble and saved their souls by this gift of all
they had to the Church. William seems to have been
either too young or too apathetic to have objected to the
paternal alienation of his patrimony. He became a monk;
that is enough.

Little remains of its buildings. There are some ruins of
the kitchen, some dormitories over it with lancet windows,
and the walls are about 3 feet thick. Human remains,
fragments of encaustic tiles with ' Magdalene ' on them,
carved stone and oak, and coins of Roman and of mediæval
days, have been from time to time turned up. Some of its
stained glass now decorates the entrance porch at Prior's
Court.* It represents ' a number of monkeys playing
on musical instruments; one riding a hobby-horse, and
others not quite so decent. There is also one with two
figures, a man and woman in the dress of the fourteenth
century. The male figure is seated near a table, smoking;
the tapster's wife is pointing to the chalked score, and at
the feet of the table there is an empty jug and dice
scattered on the floor. There is also a single figure on

* Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 59.

another "quarry," in the dress of the same period.' Such decoration seems odd in a religious building; but, as appears at Lamborne Church, it was not rare. St. Bernardine, denouncing the architectural fancies of the Cluniac monks, asks: 'What is the meaning of those ridiculous monsters in the cloisters, and of that deformed beauty, before the very eyes of the brethren when reading? Why are disgusting monkeys there, or ferocious lions, or horrible centaurs, or spotted tigers, or fighting soldiers, or huntsmen sounding the bugle?'

Stone coffin lids have been found, one of which to 'Hieronimus Robertus, Prior primus,' and having a cross carved on it, is now preserved at East Hendred; and another of Caen stone, having on it a figure of a priest under a floreated canopy, all of which had once been coloured, was exhumed in moving the foundation of the chapel. Poughley was dissolved by Wolsey, and was 'given to the Abbot and Convent of Westminster in exchange for 100 acres of land (a part of which was made into St. James's Park) conveyed by the Abbot to the King.'

Some of its stones went to build the spire of Farnborough Church.

Sandleford Priory was established by Geoffrey, Earl of Perche, and Maude his wife, about the year 1200, under the rules of St. Austin's Canons. Little is at present known of its history; but at one time it seems to have paid tithes to the Church of Newbury.* Ashmole refers to the church as containing, near the high-altar steps, a freestone tomb of a mailed knight, cross-legged, with a deep shield on his left arm, and seeming to draw his sword. His feet rested on a dragon; and it is possible that this was the effigy of the Earl of Perche, the founder of the Priory. In the time of Edward IV. it was given to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor; and during the reign of James I. it was made a separate parish, its owner having to pay to the

* 'Hist. of Newbury.'

Rector of Newbury Church an annual sum of £81, for which he had a pew there.* It was converted into a dwelling-house, also called 'Sandleford Priory,' and the ancient chapel forms the modern dining-room. Here once lived charming Mary Montagu, the centre of that literary coterie of which Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Reynolds, Beattie, and Mrs. Carter, were the brilliant lights; and here originated the term 'blue-stocking' for women of such tastes. For 'Dr. Stillingfleet was in the habit of attending her literary parties in a full suit of cloth, with blue worsted stockings, and rendered himself so entertaining that the ladies used to delay their discussions until his arrival, declaring, "We can do nothing without our blue-stockings" —whence the *bas bleu !*'

There were many other minor religious establishments, which are referred to at different times, though none were of any real importance. Thus it is said that King John, in 1202, bestowed the site of the late Castle of Farringdon, at Great Coxwell, on the Cistercian Monks for an alien abbey, which was an offshoot of Beaulieu. Leland, again, notes a Priory of Black Nuns, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen at Hamme, near Wantage; but of none of these are there any remains. At Shottesbrooke also, near Maidenhead, was an obscure college or chantry for one warden, and at most ten priests, founded by Sir William Trussell, of Cublesdon in Staffordshire, in 1387. It was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and Edward III. enriched it with the Church of Battlesden (Basilden). It was worth at the Dissolution, in annual value, £33 18s. 8d.; but it made no mark in the ecclesiasticism of the county. Similarly, there are the remains of a small chantry or monastery, called the 'Jesus of Bethlehem,' which was an offshoot of that at Sheen, near Richmond. But these disappeared probably when the 'alien' priories were abolished.

Donnington possessed a religious house of Maturins, or

* Lysons.

Friars of the Holy Trinity for the Redemption of Captives. The society, instituted in 1200 by St. John de Mattia, and St. Felix de Valois, wore white robes with a red and blue cross on their breasts, and took their names from having their first house in Paris, near St. Mathurine's Chapel. Their rule does not appear to have been so harsh as that of other societies. Their property was divided into three parts: one for the entertainment of religious persons, another to relieve the poor, and a third to redeem Christians captured by the infidels; but though they were not allowed feather-beds unless sick, they were permitted to lie on wool and have a pillow! They might ride, though not on horses, and might drink wine 'so tempered with water that it may be to sobriety.' They were compelled to work; for if 'he can and will not work, let him be obliged to quit the place, since the Apostle says, " He that does not work, let him not eat."'

The house at Donnington was founded in 1392,* and in the following year Sir Richard de Abberbury, who is considered by some to have been its founder, refers to it in a deed relating to a Hospital for the Poor, which he had also built there. By another document, dated 1500, Robert Haire, minister of the Almshouse in Donnington, directed his body to be 'buried in the new Chapel of Jesus, on the south side of the Church of the Friars of the Holy Cross, in Donnington;' but no trace thereof at present exists. It paid tithes to the Priory of the Holy Trinity of Wallingford, until it was dissolved by a Bull of Pope Clement VII. It was a peaceful retreat of quiet monks, who, like others of more eventful or dissolute lives, were swept away in 1538. Dr. John Loudon, of Wallingford, was the energetic Commissioner of this district, and did not think much of the little Priory. 'At the Crowche Fryers besyd Newbery,' he says, in a letter to Sir Richard Rich, 'was no more butt a power (poor) Chalys. The

* W. Money, F.S.A., ' Hist. Donnington Priory.'

londes be gudde xxij^li by yere, butt the guddes all were not worthe the mynistre rewardyd vj^li.' So the common seal was broken, the church and house defaced; the minister received his £6, and he and his brethren went forth into the world. The lands were sold to Edward Fettyplace for about £395; and other properties in Northbrook Street, Newbury, East Hendred, and elsewhere, were gradually disposed of; but the Priory buildings were kept distinct, and passed through the hands of the Grevills and the Iremongers, to whom it belonged when, with the other buildings of the village, it was burnt by Sir John Boys in 1644.

The present 'Donnington Priory' was built, long after the destruction of the ancient building, by Mr. Cowslade; but it seems possible that some of its fragments were incorporated in the new house; and this eventually became the property of the son of Dr. Hughes, Canon of St. Paul's, whose grandson was the author of 'Tom Brown's Schooldays.' Finally it was purchased by Mr. Fellowes.* It had remained in the Cowslade family until 1814, one of whom at least had opinions of his own. He was Gentleman-Usher of the Privy Chamber to Queen Charlotte, and was buried at Shaw in 1795; and it is stated on his tombstone that ' He divided his fortune chiefly amongst his kindred, esteeming it a Piece of Vanity to aim at perpetuating a Family by Adoption, which by the Will of Providence is on the verge of being extinct, and which sooner or later is to be the common Lot of all Mankind.'

The monastery of the Mendicant Order of the Franciscan, or Grey, Friars, at Reading, was erected in 1306, when Edward I. granted them fifty-six oaks from the Royal Forest of Windsor. They were instituted by St. Francis of Assisi in Italy, in 1209; and, establishing themselves at Canterbury in 1224, appeared in Berkshire about 1233. They were zealous preachers, and their church was, unlike other monasteries, the only important building in its precincts.

* W. Money, F.S.A., ' Hist. Donnington Priory.'

The first site, in the Cavesham Road, was granted by Adam de Lothbury, at that time Abbot of the neighbouring Benedictine monastery; but, being found damp, a fresh piece of ground was given them in 1285, on which the church now stands. In each case it was subject to the condition that they were not to ask alms, acquire property, nor solicit donations; nor were they to seek to extend their buildings beyond those originally constructed. The church, dedicated to St. James and completed in 1311, consisted of a nave, with side aisles, transepts, and a chancel; the latter being separated from the church by a screen. The conventual buildings were on the north side, and were probably small.*

They were swept away, like the rest of Berkshire monasteries; and Dr. Loudon 'inwardly defaced the Churche.' Some of the aged brethren appealed to be allowed to finish their days in the cells and orchard where their lives had been passed; but their appeal met with no response, and in secular garments they were turned away. It must have been a cruel irony to them to sign the act of surrender. In it they were made to say that 'the very true way to perfection, and to please God,' does not consist 'in the traditions and inventions of man's wit, in wearing of a grey, black, white, or any other coloured garment, cloak, frock, or coat, in girding ourselves upon our outward garments with girdles full of knots;' and that 'we therefore, the guardian and convent of the house, called commonly Greyfriars of Radynge, considering that we may be the true servants of God as well in a secular habit as in a friar's coat,' do submit ourselves to the King.

The Friary became converted to secular uses very soon. Granted by the Crown to the Corporation, it was used as a guildhall, a hospital, a workhouse for children and aged persons; and lastly a 'bridewell,' by bricking up the spaces between the arches to form cells, and removing the roof

* Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. ii.

of the nave. A field behind it, surrounded by a branch of the 'Plummery Ditch,' bore the name of the Friary Mead as late as 1802. It continued in this state until 1860, when the Venerable Archdeacon Phelps obtained the building from the Corporation, and in 1863 the restored building was re-opened as a church.

Hurley Priory, a cell of the great Abbey of Westminster under the Benedictine rule, was endowed by Geoffrey de Mandeville, the ancestor of the Earl of Essex, in 1087. It was dedicated to St. Mary, whence its name of 'Lady Place.' The chapel, now the parish church, was consecrated by St. Ormund, Bishop of Salisbury, and became the burial-place of Edith, sister of Edward the Confessor, and of John d'Oyley, in 1492. Suppressed in 1535, when its revenues amounted to £121 8s. 5d., the Priory passed in 1545 to Leonard Chamberlayne, and in 1558 to the family of the Lovelaces.

There they settled. The mansion, built by one of them 'out of the spoils of Spanish galleons from the Indies, rose on the ruins of a house of Our Lady in that beautiful valley through which the Thames, not yet defiled by the precincts of a great capital, nor rising and falling with the flow and ebb of the sea, rolls under woods of beech round the gentle hills of Berkshire. Beneath the stately saloon, adorned by Italian pencils, was a subterraneous vault, in which the bones of ancient monks had sometimes been found. In this dark chamber some zealous and daring opponents of the Government had held many midnight conferences during that anxious time when England was impatiently expecting the Protestant wind.' *

Not that the house actually occupied the whole of the conventual buildings. It was constructed, probably on ancient foundations, some short distance from the quadrangle, one side of which is still the church, and

* Macaulay, vol. ii., p. 380.

the others contain outhouses and stables, made out of the old refectory.

The house of the Lovelaces stood in the open field to the east. It was pulled down in 1837, and only the vaults in which the Orange conspirators met, and which William III. afterwards visited with sympathetic interest, are left to show its site. Its inlaid staircase now adorns a house in the north of England,* and its painted panels have been disposed of. 'The last inhabitant of old Lady Place was the brother of Admiral Kempenfelt; and here he and the Admiral planted two thorn-trees, which he took a great pride in. One day, on coming home, he found that the tree planted by the Admiral had withered away, and said : "I feel sure that this is an omen that my brother is dead."† That evening came the news of the loss of the *Royal George.*'

The only description of what the old house was is to be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1831, which also gives a view of the building as it then appeared.

In 1338, William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, erected, on an old foundation of the Knights Templar, the Priory of Bisham, or Bustleham, which was held by St. Austin's Canons. In the reign of Stephen the old Precep-tory had received the Manor of Bisham, as well as land in Bray, in 1272, from Robert de Ferrariers, whose grandfather had obtained it from William the Conqueror; and after the disappearance of the Templars in 1312, the Preceptory was held by the Knights Hospitaller of St. John of Jerusalem, until 1335. In that year it, as well as the Manor of Crook-ham, was granted by Edward III. to De Montacute, who then built the monastery, and endowed it with £285 1s. per annum.‡ Its last Prior, Barlow, became Bishop of St. David's, each of whose five daughters—for he married as soon as he was free—also became the wife of a bishop.

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* See *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1831. † Murray's 'Handbook.'
‡ Dugdale.

In 1520 John Grove held a farm of the Prior and Convent of Bustleham, in the parish of Maydenhythe, and this may have been the land held by the Templars, and transferred to the new foundation. The Priory was first dedicated to our Lord and His mother, the blessed Virgin, then to 'the blessed Virgin Mary;' but it was finally styled 'the Conventual Church of the Holy Trinity.' Of the earlier buildings little now remains unchanged. The octagonal tower, the pointed doorway, and the hall, are of Stephen's time; but all the rest is of the Tudor period, and was built by Sir Philip Hoby. The hall itself has a finely timbered roof; but many of the old windows and panes are now filled in. At one end was a fine lancet window of three lights, and at the other is an open gallery, all carefully 'restored' in 1859. Of the Conventual Church, unless the hall be it, there is no trace. The Rev. T. E. Powell has remarked that there were traces of an apsidal structure to be seen in the meadow on the east side of the house, but it did not lie east and west. Portions of large columns suitable to such an edifice are found in farm buildings near. In the grounds, also, the moat round the gardens still remains, but the bath, once used by Queen Elizabeth, has been filled in.

The Tudor building has apparently encased the principal ruins of the ancient Abbey. The conventual barn built of Spanish chestnut still exists separate and entire. That the hall was used as a burial-place is evident from the fact that monuments to many of the illustrious dead were standing there in the last century. On the south side of the house is the long apartment which, though now forming two rooms (the 'Council Chamber' and a bedroom), was in its former state used by Princess Elizabeth during her enforced retirement here. The bow window and a dais 16 inches above the floor were made at this time for her convenience. Here she spent three years under the surveillance of Sir Thomas Hoby, who was after-

wards Ambassador in France, where he died in 1566. But the time in so lonely a spot does not seem to have passed unpleasantly. When Sir Thomas attended the Court of the Queen, she said : ' If I had a prisoner whom I wanted to be most carefully watched, I should entrust him to your *charge;* if I had a prisoner I wished to be most tenderly treated, I should entrust him to your *care.*'

In the walls of the mansion is a relic of the old dangerous days, namely, a secret room, the entrance being carefully concealed behind the tapestry, and its chimney communicating with that of the great hall. It is significant of the necessity for concealment that may at any time have arisen even in the noblest houses in the land.

The Priory was a favourite burial-place of the De Montacutes, and the body of the Earl of Salisbury, its founder, was interred in the chapel. There were also monuments, according to Ashmole, to William his son, who fought at Poictiers; to his son John, who was attainted and beheaded in 1400, his body having been brought from Cirencester ;* to his son Thomas, who died at the siege of Orleans in 1428, and who, like those before mentioned, was also Earl of Salisbury ; to his son-in-law Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, beheaded at York in 1460 for espousing the Lancastrian cause ;† to his two sons Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the ' Kingmaker,' and John Neville, Marquis of Montague, who both fell at Barnet in 1471 ; to his grandson Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick (son of George, Duke of Clarence, by Richard Neville's daughter Isabel), who was beheaded in 1499 for attempting to escape from the Tower of London ;‡ and to many others whose names even are forgotten.

In 1536 the Priory was surrendered to Henry VIII., who refounded it in the following year, ' endowing the new establishment with the lands of Chertsey, Ankerwyke, Little

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* Dugdale.   † Trans. N. D. F. C. Excursion to Bisham.
                ‡ Murray.

Marlow, and Medmenham, to the amount of £661 14s. 9d.
a year, for the maintenance of an abbot and thirteen Bene-
dictine monks; but in three years it was finally suppressed.
It was granted by the King to his repudiated wife Anne of
Cleves, whose property it did not, however, become until the
reign of Mary, to whom she applied for permission, 'for the
sake of their dear father and brother,' to exchange it with
Sir Philip Hoby, the last English papal legate at Rome, for
his house in Kent.   Thus it came into the hands of the
Hoby family, who built the present mansion.

Naturally it is full of legends. 'Tradition tells that
when Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, was going to the
Crusades, he came with all his train for last prayers at the
Abbey he had founded; and his daughter, then at the
convent at Marlow, came hither with all her nuns to meet
him. A squire, who had been in love with her before, seized
the opportunity for elopement, and they escaped in a boat,
but were taken at Marlow.   She was sent back to her
convent, and he was shut up in the tower, whence he tried
to escape by means of a rope, which he made from his
clothes torn into shreds; the rope broke, and he was dread-
fully injured, and was taken into the Abbey, where he
afterwards became a monk.'*

The Hobys, too, have left a legendary ghost.   In the
dining-room is the portrait said to be that of Lady Hoby,
the widow of the Sir Thomas who was Ambassador to
France.   She is represented with a 'very white face and
hands, and attired in the dress of a widow lady of her rank
at that period—coif, weeds, and wimple.' 'In this dress
she is still supposed to haunt a bedroom, where she appears
with a self-supported basin moving before her, in which she
is perpetually trying to wash her hands; but it is remark-
able that the apparition is always in the negative, the black
part white, the white black.   The legend is, that because
her child William Hoby could not write without making

* Murray's 'Handbook,' p. 81.

blots, she beat him to death. It is remarkable that twenty years ago, in altering the window-shutter, a quantity of children's copy-books of the time of Elizabeth were discovered pushed into the rubble between the joists of the floor; and that one of these was a copy-book which answered exactly to the story, as if the child could not write a single line without a blot.'

Bisham remained in the Hoby family until 1768, when it passed into the hands of the Millses of Hampshire, who took the name of Hoby; and it was finally sold in 1780 to the ancestor of the present owner, Mr. Vansittart. Bisham Church, which is situated but a short way from the ancient Priory, shows some traces of Norman work, and many monuments to the Hobys. One of these, erected over the bodies of Sir Philip and Sir Thomas by the widow of the latter, who caused the bodies to be brought over from the Continent, contains an epitaph, written by this learned lady in Greek, Latin, and English, one of them terminating with :

> ' Give me, O God ! a husband like unto Thomas,
> Or else restore me to my husband Thomas.'

Her prayer was answered. Within a year Sir Thomas Russell had proposed to her, and she accepted him. Whether the unhappy inky-fingered child she is said to have so brutally used was the issue of the marriage, is not stated. But this learned mother may, like others, have had a stupid son, and did not spare the rod, though she spoilt the child.

Full of English history as Bisham is, it owes its origin to the monasticism of mediæval Berkshire.

Probably the least of the smaller religious foundations was that at Childrey, where, in 1526, Fetyplace founded a 'perpetual' chantry of one priest, by the name of the ' Chantry of the Holy and Undivided Trinity and the glorious Virgin St. " Kateryn,"' and ordained Sir William Rudde as the first cantarist or chaplain thereof. Prayers

were therein rendered for the repose of the souls of the family of the pious founder, and detailed instructions were issued that these appeals should be made after the mass, or before the following commemorations. On Sunday, that *de Sĉa Trinitate;* Monday, *de Spiritu;* Tuesday, *de Angelis;* Wednesday, *de Cruce;* Thursday, *de Corpore Christi;* Friday, *de homine Jesu;* Saturday, *de annunciatione beatificæ Mariæ Virginis.* There was also to be 'a Mass of Requiem, with *placebo* and *dirige,* and *commendaciam* on each anniversary of the death' of each of those prayed for. But it didn't last long. Far from being 'perpetual,' Henry VIII. made it very temporary.

But monasticism, which had done good work in its day, was dying a natural death. It had not kept pace with the times, nor had it, in its old age, preserved its original purity and strength. It had become to some extent a vehicle for the pauperization of the idle and indolent. Its priests, in many cases, were worse than worthless. 'They took secular employment, and left their flocks without due care ;' they 'were both ignorant and scandalous for their ill lives, and many of them so intolerably bad, lazy, and wicked, that the parishioners oftentimes brought informations against them to the Bishops of the Dioceses, and also to the Council.'

Small wonder then that the first efforts of the Reformation in sweeping away these religious foundations, even though it was so ruthlessly done as to condemn both good and bad to the same fate, met with little objection from the people at large. Doubtless the immediate effects were the spoliation of the property of the Church, the throwing upon the ranks of the population thousands of priests and nuns, good, bad, and indifferent, and the staying that eleemosynary system by which alms and goods had been dispensed with lavish hand. Some 10,000 recluses of both sexes, very few pensioned, were thus turned adrift to work or die. One of the two

° ' Hist. of Wallingford.'

they must have done, for the laws against 'rufflers, sturdy vagabonds, and valiant beggars' were severe to cruelty. All that can be hoped is that the best of them found willing hands to aid them, in thankfulness for past help and assistance, and that the 'sturdy ones' learnt to earn their daily bread.

To the poor it was at first a cruel blow, as with the suppression of the monasteries the daily dole from their gates ceased. The monks had represented the arts of peace, and their very lives in these country districts had encouraged them to pursue agriculture. Wheat, therefore, rose considerably in price after the Dissolution, whereas before it had varied little. A song of the days says :

'I'll tell thee what, good vellowe,
  Before the vriars went hence,
A Bushel of the best wheate
  Was zold for vourteen pence ;
And vorty eggs a penny,
  That were both good and newe ;
And this, I say, myself have seen,
  And yet I am no Jewe.'

Of course it was not merely the loss of these centres of peaceful labour that so affected the price of the great staple. There must have been a check in the order of agricultural labour when the monks ceased to govern and supervise.

No great radical change, such as this, can be effected without bringing some evil with it, though that evil may often be outweighed by the good. Rightly or wrongly the thing was done, and it was well on the whole for England that when Mary had assumed the sceptre, and proposed to pass an Act of Parliament, restoring to the Church its plundered property, the Lords 'clapped their hands upon their swords, declaring that so long as they were able to wear a weapon by their side, with their Abbey lands they would never

part.' And so monasteries and priories and such religious foundations passed away, and in their place grew up, under the purer light of the reformed faith, freer institutions, self-dependence and self-help, such as the land had never seen before.

The mediæval labour of the country had enriched it with many ecclesiastical edifices besides these monastic foundations. The period of Norman architecture had terminated with its Transitional stage. About 1189, or with the reign of Henry II., the ' Early-English ' style, with its long pointed lancet windows, followed, lasting until about 1306, or to the end of the reign of Edward I. It replaced and modified in many cases the previous Norman work, and to its period belong the curious octagonal apse of Tidmarsh, and the round towers of Welford and Great Shefford, which date from Henry III.'s reign. To this same architectural period may be attributed much of the work in the churches of Aldworth (containing monuments of the Beches), Bray (that of Simon Alleyn, its vicar), Bradfield, Compton, Englefield (the tomb of the Marquis of Winchester, who defended Basing House), East Ilsley (those of the Hildesleys), Farringdon (monuments of the Unton family), Long Wittenham, St. Lawrence, Reading (where Blagrave is buried), St. Nicholas Abingdon, Uffington, Wantage (monuments of the Fitzwarines), and Welford. The Decorated style, from 1307 to 1377, or to the reign of Edward III., with its traceried windows and more ornamented mouldings, canopies, and niches, is shown in the churches of Ashbury, Bray, Didcot, Farringdon, Harwell, Long Wittenham, Shottesbroke (with the tomb of Sir William Tressell, 1337), St. Andrews, Sonning (where Lord Stowell is buried), Sparsholt (the tombs of the Achards, in the fourteenth century), Wantage and Welford. Finally the Perpendicular style, which was the last distinct architectural system, and which is characterized by the squareness of door-headings and squarely panelled windows,

has left its trace in the churches of Didcot, Lamborne (with the tombs of the Isburys), Letcombe Regis, Newbury, St. Lawrence and St. Mary's, Reading ; St. Mary's, Wallingford ; Stanford, Wantage and Welford.   Those of Easthampstead, Wokingham (with the tomb of Bishop Godwin 1590), Clewer (that of Martyn Expence), Winkfield, Binfield (Admiral Vernon, 1794), White Waltham, St. Peter's Wallingford (Sir W. Blackstone), Blewbury, East Ilsley, Harwell, Hagbourne, Little Wittenham (the Dunches), Yattenden (Sir T. Norreys), Sutton Courtenay, Drayton, St. Helen's, Abingdon (the Goulds), Radley, Wytham (the Wightams), Cumnor (Sir Anthony Forster), Appleton (Sir I. Fettyplace, 1593), Fyfield (Sir John Golafre), Stanford, Coleshill, Pangbourne, Wargrave (Mr. Day, author of ' Sandford and Merton'), Rotherfield Greys (Lord Knollys) Tilehurst (Sir Peter Vanlore), Burghfield, Beenham (Vicar Stackhouse), Speen (Sir John Baptist de Castillon, 1594, and those of the Margrave and Margravine of Anspach), Kintbury (the Darells), Inkpen, Peasemore, and Wasing, have nothing especially noteworthy, except the monuments named.   The churches of Bracknell, Bearwood, Boyne Hill, and Theale, are all more or less modern.

The ecclesiastical history of Berkshire is somewhat varied. When Birinus, the apostle to the Saxons, in 634,

'To turne King of Wessex, Kynegils, to Christendom,
    And that land of Wessex, unto this land he com'

his See of Dorchester governed so large a proportion of the Southern and Midland counties, that in 705 it was split up, and eventually, as time went on, formed part of the Bishoprics of Winchester, Salisbury, Bath and Wells, Lichfield, Worcester, and Hereford.   Meanwhile the ' Archdeaconry' of Berks was assigned to the Diocese of Sherborne, and in 909 was taken thence to form the new See of Ramsbury, the episcopal palace of which appears to have been at Sonning.   This, about A.D. 1059, was re-

united with Sherborne by Bishop Herman, who made Sonning his principal residence, until in the reign of Edward he transferred his See thence to Sherborne by 'synodal authority and the King's munificence.' It was again transferred to Old Sarum, and finally to Salisbury in 1217 ; and in the reign of Richard II. the Bishop resided at Sonning Palace, where Isabella of Valois, the young wife of the King, fled for protection. With the Bishop of Sarum the palace remained until the reign of Elizabeth. An old ash-tree now alone marks the spot.

So the 'Archdeaconry' of Berks remained until 1836, when it was transferred to Oxford. It has now nine rural deaneries, and numbers 148 parishes, as compared with the 140 that existed in the reign of Henry VIII., and 193 churches.

CHAPTER VIII.

CIVIL LIFE.—ITS TOWNS AND VILLAGES, AND THEIR UPGROWTH.

WITH the Norman Conquest, or rather with the more peaceful times that followed after the amalgamation of the Saxon and Norman, the steady progressive increase in the national prosperity took its rise. By the reign of Henry II. the distinction between the races had almost been obliterated; and when Edward I. came to the throne, even the peculiar differences between the Norman and Saxon attire had disappeared. The older towns lived and grew; new ones sprung up; roads multiplied. The civil history of a county is the science of its roads. First, the hunting nomads follow river-lines for water. Then, when able to carry water, and better armed against the savage animals of the forests, they traced pathways across the open hills. Then tiny hamlets grouped themselves where these tracks met, as the inhabitants more and more ceased to follow a nomad life, until, with an agricultural people, came a clearance of woodland, less rainfall, and better drainage of valleys. Cultivation extended, and hence scattered homesteads gathered others unto them, and fresh villages were formed. Every such creation induced further roads, until, as the county settled more firmly and continuously into peace, they by degrees assumed their present form and direction. Main roads at

first ran on high and dry land; next they united the most frequented fordways; and finally, they connected those towns which, from political or commercial motives, successively came into prominence. War, with its castle-centres of active life, first made these towns; then, or often coeval with them, the great monastic institutions exercised the same attractive power; and lastly, commerce, based on wider human interests than either, asserted its centralizing influence.

Nothing is more interesting in the history of the county, therefore, than to watch the gradual upgrowth of its towns to power, and to trace them thence, sometimes, through their comparative decadence. Thus in Saxon times, Wantage and Wallingford have each in their turn been of importance. Under Norman and mediæval kings, Wallingford, Abingdon, and Newbury rose into notice, and Wantage fell. The great market held at Ilsley ceased to be of importance when the Kennet navigation was opened in 1716, by diverting the direction of improved facilities of internal traffic, and its decay was completed when the turnpike road from Oxford to Newbury was opened in 1776. In modern times all these have dropped into second-place, and Reading has outstripped them in population and in wealth, and has continued to increase in material prosperity. As it was one of the first occupation sites of Palæolithic man, so, for reasons similar to those which made Celt and Roman and Saxon necessarily hold it, it has continued to grow. Towns rose and fell from political or ecclesiastical causes in early days; and so would have Reading, had its only *raison d'être* been that of an appanage to the great Abbey of King Henry. But as it was strategically valuable in the days of feudalism, so, as commerce usurped the dominion of the sword, it has not retrograded, but as the junction of many roadways has risen, and will continue to rise, while trade makes it its seat. Windsor has remained just where it was, sharing in the general

national prosperity, but owing its existence to the fortress, under which it grew and was protected.

Wantage, as the residence of Saxon Alfred, was noteworthy in his time. Ethelwulf was Eaolderman of Berkshire then, and must often have visited the capital town of 'Wanting.'* It was situated on the lower and newest branch of the 'Ickleton' Street, and through it also probably ran a winding trackway, running north and south, as the lowlands became drier and less wooded, joining the British stations at Abingdon and Hungerford. It stood also at a cross-road on the most important highway passing by the best point of passage over the Thames at Wallingford. Mr. Wise discerned, he thought, remains of an earthen vallum at Limborough; and coins of Valens and others, and a stone pavement, have also been found. But Wantage only rose to notice in the Saxon time, when, as the patrimony of the Wessex kings, it contained the royal palace where Alfred the Great was born, in 849. This was probably situated at the 'High Garden.' Alfred devised the manor by will to his wife Ealswitha, daughter of Ethelred of Mercia, who died in 904, when it again reverted to the Crown. Here, too, Ethelred II. held a council to revise the Saxon laws in 990; and it was noted as a royal domain when the Survey was made, and kept so until the reign of Richard I. He gave it to Baldwin de Bethune, Earl of Albemarle, whence it passed to William Mareschal, Earl of Pembroke, Hugh Bigod, Fulke Fitzwarine (in Henry III.'s reign), Sir Richard Hankford, and Sir William Bourchier, to whom it was given by Elizabeth. He was afterwards created Lord Fitzwarine, and his descendants became Earls of Bath.

Wantage sank as soon as the Normans came. Its royal palace passed away, and it became a quiet country village, noted for its sacking and its corn-market. It owed its

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* From *want*, a mole, and *ing*, a meadow; Anglo-Saxon. Also spelt Wanating, Waneting, and Wanting.

fame to a vanished race; and of Saxon Wantage nothing is left. Its church, founded by Norman hands, is now of Early English architecture, with Perpendicular and Decorated work, and covers the tombs and brasses of some of the Fitzwarines. The only person of note that Wantage has produced, besides Alfred, was Bishop Butler, the author of 'Butler's Analogy,' who was born in 1692 in the 'Priory House,' and educated at the Free Grammar School.

With the advent of the Norman rule, Wallingford* took the place of Wantage in importance. Its British and Roman history has been already referred to, and there is a further trace of these ancient associations in the arms of the town, a castle with sun and stars above, which appear on a coin of Constantius. It was a large place even in Saxon times, for in the reign of the Confessor there were 276 houses paying 'gabel tax' to the Crown.

At the time of the Conquest, Earl Wigod ruled it as the chief town in Berkshire. While Windsor had but 100 *hagæ*† or houses, and Reading but 28, it possessed 494 dwellings. D'Oyley, who was made Baron of Hokenorton, was directed to fortify it, and also held at this time the Manors of Chaddleworth, Letcombe, Bassett, Shefford, and Ardington; but it was not until Toky, the only son of Wigod, was killed in defending the life of William I. at Gerberoi that the whole of the lands passed into the Norman's (D'Oyley's) hands. His rule was one of cruelty and rapine. He is said to have burned the Abbey of Abingdon; but this is doubtful, seeing that a strong friendship existed between him and Abbot Athelhelm. The curfew bell was early introduced by him, and still rings at 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. Sickness at last overcame the knight; and, under

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* Wallingford, spelt at different periods Wealinga, Waling, Walin, Walling, and Wallyngford; Wallingfort, Walyngforth.

† From Sax. *hægh*, a house fenced or ditched; allied to *heg*, a hedge.

its softening influence, he founded the Priory of Wallingford. Superstition, too, had probably something to do with his reformation. He had certainly obtained from the Abbot, through some undue influence, the estate of Tadmorton; and falling ill soon after, he had a vision.* He dreamt that 'he seemed to be in a royal palace, and to see a queen seated on a throne; and by her stood two Abingdon monks that at his entrance knelt before the Queen, and pointed him out as the man who usurped her possessions and caused their complaint. She ordered him to be thrust out of doors, and carried to the meadow and there punished. So it was done, and being made to sit, some ill-behaved little boys brought hay from the meadow, and having wetted it, set it on fire around him and smoked him. As he groaned in his sleep his wife woke him, to whom he told his dream, and with her advice he vowed reparation; and as soon as he was well enough, he made formal restoration of the Manor of Tadmorton to the Abbot on St. Mary's altar at Abingdon.'

Revolts of the unhappy English were common and fierce. Hereward the Wake long held the Normans at bay in the Lincoln fens; and Aldred, a monk of Abingdon, who had essayed to aid him, was imprisoned in the new keep at Wallingford. After D'Oyley's death the town became the fief of the Bassetts, who held Wallingford and Ardington in the time of the second Henry.

By this time it was rich, with fourteen churches, which testified to the size and importance of the place; and, judging from the archives, the pure Saxon names were disappearing, and giving place to English. There are many quaint names, both of men and women, in the Corporation Records and Burghmote Rolls. There were John Time-of-day, Nicholas Three-half-pence, Alice Lang-heregaud, and Alice Longhair. This latter lady seems to have been of doubtful character. For a certain man was fined

* Proc. Berks. Archæol. Soc.

thirty-seven pence for ' being with Aliz Longhair.' As time went on, too, owing to the influx of Norman peoples, there were such fanciful names as Estrilda, Elewiz, Claria, Asselina, Ybbe, and Tamason, to be found in the list of fee-farm rents.

It was one of the earliest of Parliamentary boroughs, sending representatives in 1293, and, like Windsor, paid its members, and chose them from the inhabitants, or from the Corporation. The voters were the Corporation and inhabitants ' paying scot and lot.' It was originally the gaol town, but the prison was removed to Windsor in 1314, whence it was transferred to Reading; that at Abingdon being still retained until 1870, when it was disused. A curious custom was permitted under the charter granted by Henry III., for by it an offender convicted for the first time of a grave offence could claim to lose his eyes, or be otherwise mutilated, rather than suffer death.

Richard II., when a minor, showed both courage and address. The revolt of the people under Wat Tyler did not apparently extend to Berkshire, though it had a footing in Surrey, and a Berkshire man, ' Richard Wallingford,' took a leading part in it.* He was no common man was this Richard. In happier days he would have been, at least, a demagogue ; at most, a politician with advanced views representing a turbulent radical constituency. He ' stood high in the municipal institutions of the town ; he was head-borough or constable,' and acted as lieutenant to, though not a servile follower of, his leader Tyler. The programme of the rebellious mob was comprehensive enough. ' The House of Lords, the lawyers, justices, judges, jurymen, were to be swept from off the earth,' for ' without this antidote the poisoned commonwealth must perish.' It was Richard Wallingford's calmer influence that led the King to grant the charters that were afterwards cancelled ; and he showed a sound judgment in withdrawing himself

* ' Hist. of Wallingford.'

in time from his leader, and refusing to share in the excesses which accompanied his progress. So that when, with the death of Tyler, by the Lord Mayor's dagger, the mob broke up, and when Richard of Wallingford's action in doing his utmost to restrain the violence of the rebels at St. Albans had been taken into consideration, he was pardoned; and the abortive insurrection passed away like smoke, leaving matters just where they were before. He was a man before his time. He had endeavoured to guide the unruly spirits he had helped to raise, and had seen, we may well imagine with bitter disappointment, all his efforts and theirs too, abortive. Of the rioters, John Ball, the 'popular preacher,' was hanged, drawn, and quartered; Jack Straw's head was exposed on London Bridge; but Richard Wallingford passed away in peace.

There were twelve parishes in the town of Wallingford, and its municipal Government was commendable. There were linen-markets, corn-markets, and fish-markets, and these were under careful supervision. Tallies, neatly notched to denote payment, were appended to 'quit-rents.' The selling of fish and other things 'too dear' was followed by fine, as was also 'taking in excess' and selling 'eels corrupt and dead.' Scandal-mongers and scolds went not un-punished. But other arguments were used besides fines. The pillory and ducking-stool for scolds and others, and the tumbril for persons of evil life, were kept repaired at the expense of the town; and to these were added later the stocks and whipping-post. They stood in the market-place as a warning to such wrongdoers.

Servants were not allowed out of their 'master's house any night-time, after nine of the clock, without a lawful excuse, under pain, any time so found trespassing, of 12d., and his body to ward.' Such a fine must have been a wholesome deterrent from straying, to the well disposed, and must have enabled the 'town watch' to decide with little difficulty whose wandering legs should be in 'the ward' of

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the stocks. Neither could servants 'play at tables, dice, or cards, on working days, both by night and day, in any ale house, or tippling house,' under penalties laid down. Doubtless they were practically as inoperative as if any such regulations were made now.

Wallingford, the chief town in Berkshire in William's reign, was very different when the Civil War of the seventeenth century began. The construction of the bridges at Culham, Burford, and afterwards at Dorchester, diverted some portion of the western trade to the Abingdon roads. Up to this time the bridge of Wallingford had been the most important on the Thames in these parts, but the alterations of the line of traffic had rapid results. The population of the town had sunk to be a fifth of what Reading was, and of its fourteen churches but three or four were left. Besides the loss of trade, the plague, in 1343, committed fearful ravages, and had depopulated the town. Parishes, too poor to be kept separate, had been joined together, and so by degrees these centres of spiritual activity decayed. Thus ten churches fell into disuse. Of those belonging to the religious foundations, the Benedictine Monastery of the Holy Trinity,* built by D'Oyley, the house of St. Lucien, the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, and the College of St. Nicholas, ' within the 3rd Dyke of the Castle,' were dissolved by the Reformation. Dr. Loudon, the last head of the College, had willingly shared in the process of spoliation ; and, afterwards convicted of perjury and other offences, he was sentenced to be pilloried in Oxford, Windsor, and Wokingham, ' where every voice might revile, and every hand might hurl filth at him, and then he was thrust away in the Fleet Prison, where he miserably died.'†

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* It held the Manor of Eastbury, near Lamborne, as Wallingford Castle held among its manors that of Donnington.

† Froude.

Of the other churches, All Hallows was destroyed in the Civil War. St. Mary the Minor was united to St. Peter's in 1374, and possibly the groined crypt in the High Street is a relic of it. St. John *super aquam* was in Thames Street; St. Martin's stood near the street of the same name; St. Michael's was united to St. Peter's in 1374; and St. Peter in the West and St. Rumbald's have disappeared. All Hallows, or All Saints, was probably erected on the site of the Saxon church of Wigod, and did not stand within the Castle precincts.

St. Mary the More (late Perpendicular); the Church of St. Leonard, also probably first erected by D'Oyley, as it has a Norman doorway, but repaired in 1704; and St. Peter's, which, ruined in the Civil War, was rebuilt in 1769, and which contains the grave of Sir William Blackstone, are alone left of the number that once adorned the town. Mann describes St. Peter's as furnished with wainscot pews, and as rejoicing in that exceeding tastelessness that characterized the architecture and decoration of the last century; but few would now agree with him that it was ' one of the neatest and best adapted to this northern climate of any of our country churches, which are in general gloomy, cold, and damp, and calculated to inspire those who attend them rather with horror than devotion.'

The bridge, which tradition says was erected as far back as A.D. 600, has also had its vicissitudes. The first was doubtless of wood, but the second was so nearly like that of Old London that it may well have dated as far back as the reign of John. The Civil War damaged it. It was cut through, and drawbridges made; but the repairs, executed in wood, and then in stone, probably were insufficient, for in 1809 it had to be rebuilt.

One of the most noteworthy names in the annals of Wallingford is that of the Dunches of Wittenham. They frequently represented the town in Parliament. Sir

William Dunch was member in 1612, and his eldest son, Edmund, though he supported his relative, the Protector, and was for a time Governor of the Castle, was active in the restoration of Charles I. His grandson was largely instrumental in promoting the revolution of 1688, held office as Master of the Household to Anne and George I., and was member till his death in 1719. Edmund Dunch had been created Baron Burnell by Cromwell, though the title was disallowed on the return of Charles II.; and it was said of Edmund by the Royalists that he had 'a patent to be lord of the Lord knows what, and how little he deserves it.' His race became extinct in 1719, as so many other old families in Berkshire have done. Fuller in his 'Worthies' mentions only ninety families that still occupied their ancient residences; and now apparently only three, the Eystons of Hendred, the Puseys of Pusey, and the Pleydells of Shrivenham, are left.

The ancient borough of Wallingford was one of the first to have a mayor and municipal rights; and in early days it had paid its chief magistrate £20 a year. Its decline was somewhat checked by the exertions of Sir William Blackstone, its representative, who was instrumental in bringing about the construction of two turnpike roads, one between Oxford and Reading, and the other to Wantage, which, by improving the communications, improved its commercial position. But its day had gone by. It had been the chiefest city of Berkshire in Saxon days, and had reached its highest prosperity in the time of the Norman kings.

Abingdon was also a place of note in early times; and, growing with its famous monastery, declined with its dissolution. Originally called Seovechesham, Seukesham, Seovesham, or Seusham, it was probably of British origin ; and the Isle of Andersey, opposite the site of the Abbey, may have been the position of the early settlement in summer-time. This islet the monks exchanged with Offa

of Mercia for the Manor of Goosey ; and on it the King built a palace, in which his son Egfrid died in 793.

There was 'in olde time a fortress in Andersey,' says Leland, 'part of which remained after the Conquest ; and there were kept the King's hawks and hounds. The scite is still called the Castle of the Rhe, "a fluvio præterlabente," and is occupied by an old barn.'

Kœnwulf, Egfrid's successor in the Mercian dynasty, again exchanged it, at Abbot Bethunus's request, for the Manor of Sutton, and 120 lb. of silver.

Both Abbey and town were burnt by the Danes in 872 ; but when the former was rebuilt on its more extended scale by Edred, the town grew and prospered.

There was a curious contest in the reign of Henry II. between the people of Abingdon and those of Wallingford and Oxford as to the right of the first to a free market, and at one time the disputants came to blows ; but the Abbot's men drove them out of the town.

The Oxford men wished that the market, 'which was desired to be free for all commodities,' should be stopped. It was the struggle between free trade and protection, or what represented the former in those days ; but the King would not listen to the objections raised, and commanded that 'a full market should be held at Abingdon, to which only the Abbot's tenants should be admitted.'

They were somewhat quarrelsome, the good burgesses of the ancient town ; for in 1431 there is an account of an insurrection in which Bailiff William Masdeville took a leading part. The mob had a grudge against their spiritual rulers, and were anxious to 'make the heads of the clergy as cheap as sheep's heads, 3 or 4 a penny.'

Other citizens deserved better of their town than the bailiff. Two men, named John Brett and John Houchons, or Huchyns, were far-seeing enough to understand that to improve their town, trade should flow through it, and not by it. The only bridge over the Thames then existing in

the neighbourhood was that at Wallingford. So they, 'of their own bounty,' built the bridge of six pointed arches with stone provided by Sir Peter Besils, of Besilslegh, who also left houses for its repair; and who, with Geoffrey Barbour and William and Maud Hales, were especial benefactors to the New Bridge. They built another at Burford, too; and so there arose a stream of trade by the Cirencester route.

The monks had done nothing to make or mar the bridge; the King had graciously given his royal license for it, but had added nothing to that valuable document. It seems strange nowadays to think that a great improvement such as this could not be effected without the consent of the King. But it was so; and the energy of these wise men was not, as it might have been, checked.

> 'Kynge Henry V. in his fourthe yere,
> He hath i-found for his folk a brige Berkscheere,
> Where cartis with carriage may go and come clere,
> That many winters afore were marred in the myre.
> For now is Culham Hithe* i-come to an ende,
> An al the contre the better an no man the worse.
> Few folke there were coude that way mende,
> But they waged a wed or payed of her purse;
> An if it were a beggar had breed in his bagge,
> He schulde be ryght soone ibid for to goo aboute;
> An if the pore penyless the hireward wold have
> A hood or a girdle an let him goo withoute.'†

A strong and affluent Guild—that of the 'Fraternity of the Holy Cross'—was formed about 1389, when they had a priest and two proctors chosen annually. They were instrumental in erecting a handsome rood or cross in the Church of St. Helen's; and Geoffrey Barbour, and many others who exerted themselves in the building of the New Bridge, were members of the Guild. They were incorporated in 1442, were endowed with lands so as to keep

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* 1416.   † Lysons.

in order the road between Abingdon and Dorchester, and built in 1446 a Christ's Hospital for thirteen poor men and women. Sir John Golafre and Thomas Chaucer, the son of the poet, were the trustees; and thus the latter family has had to do certainly with three principal Berkshire towns—viz., Reading, Wallingford, and Abingdon—and traditionally with Newbury, through the neighbouring Castle of Donnington.

The Guild supported two Chaplains in 1457—one, the Rood Priest, to pray for the benefactors thereto; and the other, the Bridge Priest, to intercede for the benefactors to the bridge—and for these duties each received a salary of £6 13s. 4d.

The members feasted royally on the 3rd May of each year in Banbury Court, West St. Helen's Street; and, as the following statement shows, compared with the present value of money, cheaply. They provided six calves at 2s. 2d. each, sixteen lambs at 1s. each, eighty capons at 3d. each, eighty geese at 2½d. each, and eight hundred eggs at 5d. a hundred, besides vegetables, herbs, and the like.

In 1539 they erected an aisle called Our Lady's Aisle in St. Helen's Church, which was ceiled by Nicholas Gould, one of the members of the Guild, to whose memory an inscription was placed, asking the reader to,

> ' In the worship of our Lady,
> Pray for Nicholas Gould and Amy.'

The roof is ornamented with figures of kings and saints under carved canopies, said to have once belonged to the great Abbey.

This semi-religious Guild was, like others, dissolved by Henry VIII. in 1547; but, at the request of Sir John Mason, it received a new charter in 1553 from Edward VI., incorporating the Guild and some of the chief inhabitants of the town as Governors of the ' Christ's

Hospital,' when a sermon was preached in commemoration of the benefactors by Laud before he became a bishop.

It is a low brick and timber house, with a wooden cloister, having texts, a representation of the market cross which the Guild had erected, and paintings illustrative of almsgiving, some of which contain portraits, which, tradition says, are those of Geoffrey Barbour, Sir John Mason, and Edward VI. In the old hall the stained glass bears the arms of these benefactors to the town, whose portraits, together with those of Sir Peter Besils, Lionel Bostock, and Thomas Tesdale (founder of Pembroke College), hang on the walls. There is an ancient picture, too, showing Barbour giving John Huchyns money to build the bridge, which is being constructed in the background. To the energy of the one, the wealth of the other, and the sympathy of the brethren of the Guild of the Holy Cross, the bridge was due.

With the dissolution of the great Abbey the town began to decline. The clothing trade and manufacture that flourished in Berkshire, at Newbury, Hendred, Reading, Abingdon, and elsewhere, fell off and decayed with the disappearance of the monastic edifices in the county. As Leland says, 'The town stondith by clothing.'* An appeal to Queen Mary resulted in the grant of new lands to the town, and a charter of incorporation, whereby it had a mayor, two bailiffs, and nine aldermen. At this time its market-place was adorned with a very handsome cross, which stood where the present market-house, a building of Queen Anne's time, is erected. It is described by Richard Symons as of octangular form, with ' 3 rows of statues— the first of 6 grave kings ; the second of the Virgin, 4 female saints, and a mitred prelate ; the third of small

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* ' Hist. of the Hundred of Wanting. '

figures of apostles and prophets; the whole ornamented with coats of arms painted and carved.' The Guild of the Holy Cross built it; for the arms of Sir John Golafre, one of the Commissioners by whom the Fraternity was incorporated by Henry VI., were on it. Waller, the Independent, destroyed it.

Like similar structures, it was the central gathering-place of the town. Here proclamations were issued, and orders notified; and here Richard Corbet, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, but then Dean of Christchurch, 'being one market-day with some of his companions at the taverne by the Crosse, a ballad-singer complayned that he had no custom and could not put off his ballads; whereupon the jolly Doctor puts off his gowne and puts on the ballad-singer's leathern jacket, and being a handsome man, and having a rare full voice, he presently vended a great many and had a great audience.'*

During the Civil War, Abingdon was held by the Royalists as an advanced post from their chief head-quarters at Oxford; and here they quartered the main body of the 'horse,' when the King, with the whole of the Royal Family, passed through in April, 1644. But it was abandoned on the approach of Waller and Essex, and General Browne occupied it for the Parliament. Their adversaries made several attempts to regain possession of it. First, the Earl of Cleveland with 150 men made a night attack, but the garrison of 1,400 drove him out again.† Sir Henry Gage made a fort at Culham Bridge to threaten it; but a sortie was made from the town, and Sir Henry was mortally wounded. In 1645 Sir Stephen Hawkins made another attack, but also failed; and finally, in 1646, Prince Rupert himself made a desperate effort; but though he gained possession of the Abbey buildings with 500 men, he was eventually compelled to abandon it.

* Aubrey.   † Lysons.

After this, Governor Browne was left at peace; but his ways were cruel. All Irish prisoners were hanged without trial by 'Abingdon Law.' Both in this Civil War, and that of 1668, the feeling of antipathy shown towards the Irish was extreme. They were looked on as representing the Papist element, against which the nation had rebelled, and, if captured, they were shown scant mercy. After the war, Abingdon subsided into a quiet town, whose days of mercantile activity had passed away, its trade now consisting of 'malting, hemp-dressing, and sack and sail-cloth making.'

In ancient buildings, besides the relics of the Abbey, it is still rich. In addition to Christ's Hospital is the Church of St. Helen, its spire supported by flying buttresses, and containing tombs of Royse, founder of the Grammar School in 1571; of Lee, five times Mayor of Abingdon, and who had 'in his lifetime issue from his loynes 200, lacking but 3;'* and lastly of Geoffrey Barbour, who died in 1417. One of its windows once contained a reference to the bridge, in which the King's name was given undue prominence by some forgotten admirer; for the motto ran:

'Henricus Quartus, quarto fundaverat anno
Rex Pontem Burford, super undas atque Culhamford.'

The Church of St. Nicholas, close to the Abbey gateway, is the most ancient, having been built by Abbot Nicholas de Colchan in 1300, on the site of a more ancient, and possibly Saxon, edifice.

The Manors of Witham, Appleton, Besilsleigh, and Hendred are intimately connected with the monastic history of Abingdon. The former, connected with the Wightams, who became extinct as far back as the reign of Edward IV., has a moated house with embattled gate-tower, which was erected by Sir Richard Harcourt in

* Ashmole.

1480, into whose hands the property had passed. Thence it returned to the King, by whom it was granted in 1539 to Lord William of Thame, and then to the son of that Sir Henry Norris who was beheaded on suspicion of being a lover of Anne Boleyn after the scene at the tournament at Greenwich. From him it went to the Berties. Appleton is also moated, and with its Norman doorway and arches of the reign of the second Henry, is the oldest manor-house in Berks.

Besilsleigh, which was old enough to contain a secret chamber, has long been destroyed ; but it had an interest in being the family residence of the Besils, who obtained it by marriage in 1350, and whose descendant, Sir Peter, gave the stone for the bridge at Culham.

But the family diminished; and finally the last of the direct line of the Besils intermarried with another old Berkshire family, the Fettyplaces of Appleton (in the church of which is the tomb of Sir John, who died in 1593), and of Little Shefford, where the heiress and her husband built a 'moated manor-house.' The great hall at Little Shefford still contains its old timber-work and windows, and on a projecting stone is a shield of the 'arms of the Besils quartering Leigh.' Its church contains the alabaster monument to Sir Thomas Fettyplace and his wife, the founder of the manor-house ; that of John Fettyplace and his wife, bearing the date of 1524 ; and both in the windows and on the tombs are the arms of Fettyplace, 'quartering Besils, and impaling those of Leigh.' *

The family returned again to Besilsleigh, and in 1634 sold it to William Lenthall, Speaker of the Long Parliament, who had something to do with Berkshire in the sequestrating days of the Civil War.

Hendred, or rather land there, is also associated with Abingdon, inasmuch as it was held under a Saxon charter by the Abbey of Abingdon; but the 'Abbey Manor' of

* Murray's 'Handbook.'

Hendred, according to Domesday, then belonged to the King. Henry I. gave it to the Empress Matilda, who granted it to the Abbey of Reading, in whose hands it remained until the Dissolution. Then it passed to the son of Sir Henry Norris, before referred to, who was beheaded 14th May, 1536; and from him to Fenton, Earl Kellie, Sir Peter Van Lore, and finally to the Eystons, in 1623.

Another of the Hendred manors, the 'Manor of Arches,' was the property of Henry de Ferrers at the Norman Survey; and then of the Turbervilles, one of whose daughters, Amice, married William de Arches; whence it descended to the Stowes of Burford, in 1422; and the Eystons of Isleworth by marriage, in 1443, in whose family it has ever since remained. Attached to the manor-house is the old Early-English Chapel of St. Amand and St. John the Baptist, which dates back probably as far as 1291; and is, with Stonor and Hazlewood in York-shire, one of the few Roman-Catholic places of worship which has always been devoted to the tenets of that creed. It may have even had a Saxon origin, for near it coins of 'Ædelred, Rex Anglorum,' have been found. It cer-tainly was endowed in 1402 by Robert Randolf with lands, tithes, and a house in East Hendred. These were alienated in 1547. It was connected with the Abbey of Reading also—for in one of its windows is the cipher of Hugh Faringdon, the last Abbot—in the same way that the district was with that of Abingdon, to which it furnished Abbots Robert de Hendred and Richard de Hendred, in 1234 and 1289. In the library adjoining the chapel is still preserved the tomb of Robert, first Abbot of Poghley, which was removed there on the destruction of that religious house; so that Hendred was closely associated with the monasticism of the county.*

In the old house are preserved the drinking-cup of Sir

Thomas More, with portraits of him and Cardinal Pole ; and the walking-staff of Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, which supported him on his way to the scaffold, and which bears the inscription that it is 'the walking-staff of John Fisher, Cardinal Bishop of Rochester, who suffered 22nd June, 1535, aged 56 years and 9 months.' Hendred was one of the few places that suffered in the Revolution of 1688, when the army of the Prince of Orange was passing over the road known as the 'Golden Mile.' There, as Charles Eyston's MS. tells us, 'Some loose fellowes (whether by orders or not I cannot tell) came hyther, went into the Chappell, pretended to mock the priest by supping out of the chalice, which they would have taken away had it been silver, as they themselves afterwards gave out : however, having torn down the Jesvs Maria from the altar, which holy names were painted upon pannells in the same frames, where the Jesvs Maria are now wrought in bugles, they retired, taking an old suite of church stuffe with them to Oxford, where they drest up a mawkin with it, and set it up there on the topp of a bonfyre. This happened on Monday, December the 11th, 1688, and this is all the mischief they did, besides breaking the lamp and carrying away the Sanctus bell.'

Farringdon, the third Saxon town of Wessex, and which contained a royal palace in which Edward the Elder died in 925, has an unimportant history. Robert Earl of Gloucester built its Castle, which was captured by Stephen after a four days' siege ; and the town, under Sir Marmaduke Rawdon, held out for the King in the later wars of the seventeenth century.

Its history is essentially of a military character. Its most noteworthy personage was that Henry Unton who, knighted for bravery at Zutphen, challenged the Duke of Guise, when he was Ambassador at the French Court, for disrespect to Elizabeth, his Queen, in that in 'speaking basely of her he had most wickedly and shamefully lied.'

But as it rose with the construction of the Abingdon bridge, and the divergence of the western traffic, to some extent, through it, so it shared in its eventual rest.   The Saxon towns of Berkshire have little influence in modern times.

Not far from Farringdon is the ancient Manor of Pusey, held by one of the oldest families in Berkshire, and originally granted to its first possessor by the tenure of a horn.   Though asserted to be of the date of Cnut, the inscription on the horn is certainly not Danish.   The tradition that the first recipient, who was an officer in Cnut's army, obtained it because he had warned the King of a Saxon ambuscade, can have, therefore, but scanty foundation.   The horn, which is 24½ inches long, and 12 inches in circumference, is of a dark brown 'tortoise-shell' colour, mounted at each end with rings of silver.   A central ring, to which is affixed two small feet to render it capable of standing, contains the inscription, which runs :

> 'Kynge Knoud geve Wyllyam Pewse
> Hys horne to holde by thy Londe.'

Though horns were used by the Saxons rather than the Normans as drinking vessels, the custom of holding manors by such curious tenures is rather Norman than Saxon ; and there are other cases of a similar character in Berkshire.   Thus there are the horns at Hungerford—one, said to have been given as a charter to the town by King John, holds about a quart of liquid ; the other, bearing the date of 1634, is of brass, and is not a drinking-horn, but a bugle, which is used to summon the tenants at the Manor Court, and was formerly* 'blown annually on Hock Tuesday to assemble the inhabitants to chuse the Constable, in whom is vested the municipal government of the town.   This officer was formerly also Coroner, Clerk of the Market, and Lord of the Manor for the time being, and was assisted by 12 feoffees and burgesses, a

* 'Topog. Descrip. Berkshire.'

portreeve, steward, etc.' This horn bears the following inscription : ⟨

> 'John a Gaun did give and grant the riall
> fishing to Hungerford 'Towne from
> Eldven Stub to Irish Stil, excepting som
> several mil Pound.
> Jehosphat Lucas was Cunstable.'

This is evidently a survival of the older tradition, as the more ancient and possibly genuine drinking-horn is uninscribed. Such vessels were doubtless handed down as heirlooms in Saxon families, all the more so if richly mounted, and may easily have come into the hands of the Norman plunderers, who may have used them for such purposes of feudal tenure as the above instance would suggest.

Farringdon and Wantage both had held Saxon palaces ; Abingdon a Saxon abbey ; Wallingford a Saxon castle ; and there was yet another place on the borders of the Thames that was a Saxon vil, which was to be the parent of a modern royal borough.

The village of Old Windsor contains the site of the palace of Edward the Confessor. Some Roman bricks and coins in the neighbourhood at St. Leonard's point to Roman occupation, though to a limited extent ; but it is only in the Confessor's reign that it comes prominently into note. It covered an old ferry over the Thames here, referred to in the metrical Anglo-Norman romance of Geoffrey Gaimar, who, in describing the Battle of Æscesdun, says :

> 'Co est un gué vers Windesoveres,
> A unes estand en unes mores.'

The origin of the name is doubtful. It has been suggested to have been derived from the winding shore of the Thames at this point, which seems far-fetched. The better interpretation appears to be that of Harrison,

who fancies that the forest district, through which runs the Windle, or 'Vindeles,' brook, on which Windlesham is situated, and which enters the Wey near Chertsey, took its name from the stream, and gave it again to the 'Royal Vil' of Edward, which grew up by the fordway on the Thames.   The early spelling gives colour to this view.   It is usually Windles-ofra, Windles-oure, Windles-ora, Windelsor, Windleshora; and only in later manuscripts does it become Windesour, Wyndosor, etc.   'The name whereof (not w'out cawse) is callyd Wyndsore; whethar it came as some affirme of ye fery over ye rivar there, ye passengers usynge (in callynge for the boate) to bydd them wynd to shoar (becawse ye boate then as now also went to a rope and a pole, thowghe not in the same place wher it is now, but where ye bridge is), or whithar it toke name of ye qualitie of ye place whiche standynge hyghe and open to the wethar is called Wyndesor becawse ye *wynd is sore* and ye ayre very subtile and percynge there as ye Inhabitants fynd it, whiche etymologie devysynge w^t my selffe if ye nature of ye place it selffe, I added anothar also thereto, de situ loci at my fyrst comynge thethar, of this effecte :

> 'The wynd is sore in highe wyndsor, whereof it maye take name,
> And wynde, for wyndynge, may import assendynge to ye same,
> As eke the hawke is sayde to sore that lyethe on highe above,
> Of which etymologies, one the trewthe I guesse dothe prove.'*

This Saxon 'vil' was a favourite residence of Edward's; and possibly the moated farm, west of the church, may represent his Saxon dwelling.   One of its guardians was Wulmar of Nutgareshale, whose son, cutting timber one day in Bruelle (Brill, Bucks) Woods, was struck blind, and remained so until he got audience with the King, whom he besought to help him, as he had been told in a dream to

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* Stowe.

visit eighty-seven churches, and 'entreat a cure of blindness from the saints.' The Confessor did not seem unwilling to class himself with the latter, though he betrayed some doubt as to his power in that capacity.* 'By my lady St. Mary,' said he, 'I shall be truly grateful if God, through my means, shall choose to take pity upon a wretched creature.' And so, dipping his hands in water, he touched his eyes, and the man saw, and exclaimed, 'I see you, oh King! I see you, oh King!'

Another and more tragical tradition is told of the moated palace. Earl Godwin had been suspected of causing the death of Alfred, the brother of the King; and while at meat, on Easter Monday, 1053, a remark was made by Edward, which caused the Earl to say: 'Syr, as I perceive well, it is tolde to the, that I should be the cause of thy brother's deth; so mut I safely swalowe this morsell of brede that I here holde in my hande as I am gyltlesse of the dede.'† None the less, when Earl Godwin received the bread he was choked to death, and was conveyed to Winchester for burial. In this same hall, again, Harold Godwinson, when seized by the hair by his brother Tosti, Earl of Northumberland, as he was drinking a health to the King, and 'handled shamefully to the amazement of all the King's household,' grasped the Earl in his arms, and lifting him, dashed him with violence on the ground.‡ Verily the gentle Edward had rude companions; and thankful for his prosperity, if not for them, he granted Windsor and its appurtenances to his new Monastery of St. Peter's. The Conqueror William, however, liked the district too, and easily effected an exchange. No mention is made in 'Domesday' of a church either here, at Eton, or at Clewer; and of what is Modern Windsor there was no trace, though the *Ait-ton*, on its island, protected the passage of the Thames which led northward. But round the Norman Castle

* William of Malmesbury. † Fabyan's 'Chronicles.'
‡ Roger of Wendover.

a village grew. Walter Fitz Other was the first Castellan and Warden of the Forest, and, from his office, his son took the name of 'Windsor.' From this race sprang the great families of the Earls of Plymouth, the Carews of Cornwall, and the Fitzgeralds and Fitzmaurices of Ireland. From the hands of Walter the Manor of Eton passed through those of Hodenge, Huntercombe, Scudamore, and Lovel to Eton College in the reign of Edward IV.

Possibly a small chapel existed in Old Windsor in Saxon days, for a priest or presbyter of the manor is mentioned as a tenant of land there. Anyhow, in 1189 Richard granted 'the Chapel of Old Windsor, and the Church of St. John the Baptist at New Windsor to the Monastery of Waltham.' By this time, therefore, the new village was large enough to want a church. Similarly mention is made in 1210, in a dispute between William de Cantilupe, Lord of the Manor of Eton, and the Prior of Merton, relative to Eton Church. So the latter village too had grown, but its church has long since passed away.

The new road through Eton to Slough was probably made when the royal residence was transferred to the Castle of Windsor. Before that it ran by Old Windsor, to cross the Thames at Staines; but with the first charter, granted by Edward I., the line of traffic began to pass through the new 'town.' A portion of the manor between the Castle and Eton, known as 'Windsor Underoure,' passed into the hands of the monks of Reading Abbey about this time, and a trace of this transference still remains in the name of the Abbot's Pile on the Eton side near Tangier Mill. To Reading also the county gaol, which had been transferred here from Wallingford in 1276, and so remained until 1314, was then removed by petition, as being a more central position.[*] Thus for some time Windsor became the county town, as assizes were held there. Jousts and great rejoicings followed at

[*] 'Typog. Descrip. Berks.'

Windsor after the victory at Crecy ; and about this time
the cross was erected at the junction of Peascod, Castle,
High, and Thames Streets ; at its foot proclamations were
read. The name still survives, and public orders are read
on its site even now. It witnessed the departure of
Richard II. from his baby queen of eleven years old ; and
by it old Sir Bernard Brocas must have often passed, from
his Manors of Winkfield, Bray, and Old Windsor, on his
way to those in Clewer and in New Windsor, near the field
which perpetuates his name in the immediate neighbour-
hood of the College of Eton. It is to Henry VI. that the
foundation of this college is due. After visiting William
of Wykeham's foundation at Winchester, he ' invited all the
faithful in Christ to aid him, for the praise, honour, and
glory of God, and of the blessed Virgin Mary, and for the
increase of Divine worship, and the increase of the holy
Church, to found, make, and ordain, and duly establish,
a College in the Parish Church of Eton, near New
Wyndesor.' Accordingly the work was begun, and materials
were brought from all parts. The sand at 1d. per load
from the ' Sandepytte,' which was ' infra situm Collegii ;'
the chalk was dug at Lyme Hoste ;* flints, of which large
quantities were used, came from Lyme Hoste and Mar-
lowe ; Caen stone from Normandy and ' ragg stone ' from
Maidstone were employed in the construction of the chapel ;
while the oak was furnished from London, Easthampstead,
Sunninghill, Windsor Forest, and numerous other places,
even as far away as Newark. The workmen were kept
strictly at work. They were fined ' for chiding,' ' for play-
ing,' ' for looking about,' ' for telling of tales,' at 2d.
for each offence ; and ' for shedding lime ' they paid as
much as 6d. Doubtless they were attentive to their work,
for the 2d. of their days would be fairly represented
by 5s. of ours. When the college became finished,
Henry directed that no other school should teach within

* Castle Hill (?).

ten miles of it. The first statutes, drawn up by William Waynflete, the first provost, in 1443, were followed by a more complete set drafted by Henry himself three years later. By them the school was to teach seventy scholars, with teachers, choristers, and thirteen almsmen; and the King added to his royal gifts of money and books the treasured relics of John the Confessor, formerly Prior of the Monastery of Bridlington. So the church was enriched by a finger-joint and a vertebra of the reputed Saint. The provisions with regard to the almsmen seem never to have been carried out, but in other respects the college has exceeded the intentions of its founder in the number of its pupils, to whom Henry's own words should be ever applicable, 'Sitis boni pueri; mites et docibiles, et servi Domini' ('Be good boys; be gentle and docile, and servants of the Lord').

In the reign of Henry VIII. first appears, in the Corporation Accounts, the charge of 40s. for the payment of the 'expenses' of the two members of Parliament for the borough; and the custom of payment of members at this time appears to have been prevalent throughout the kingdom, though the amount varied from time to time. The Commons had but little power then, and such stories as the judicial murders of the martyrs Pearson, Testwood, and Filmer at Windsor in 1543, may have done much to bring about that feeling of rebellion, both against the Church and the Sovereign, which led, not long after, to a ready acceptance of the doctrines of the Reformation, and indirectly to the bloody issue of the Civil War.

For Henry, influenced by Gardiner of Winchester, had passed a statute imposing death by burning or hanging on all who denied transubstantiation, the expediency of masses, and the necessity for auricular confession; and these men and some others were persecuted in 1543 by a band of bishops, lawyers, and knights, among them being one Master 'Fachel,' of Reading. Robert Testwood

was built of the stuff of which martyrs are made. One cause of his 'trouble' was that on going into the church he saw pilgrims, specially from those benighted places Devon and Cornwall, offering candles to 'good King Henry, of Windsor, as they called him,' and others. Also 'licking and kissing a white Lady made of Alabaster;' and 'when he saw them so superstitiously use the Image as to wipe their hands upon it, and then to stroke them over their heads and faces, as though there had bin great vertue in touching the picture, he up with his hand, in the which he had a key, and smote a piece of the border about the image downe, and with the glance of the stroke chanced to break off the image's nose. "So, good people," quoth he, "you see what it is, nothing but earth and dust, and cannot helpe itselfe, and how then will you have it to helpe you? For God's sake, Brethren, be no more deceived."'

Henry Filmer's 'trouble' was mainly that he expostulated with 'Syr Tho. Melster, which had beene a Frier before,' about his sermon; and it may be reasonably imagined that 'trouble,' though not of so grave a character, would follow on a similar expostulation now. Poor Anthony Pearson's 'troubles' also came out of sermons, but good ones; but it arose out of the hatred and malice that less favoured preachers felt towards one 'greatly esteemed among the people who flocked so much to his sermons.' For this displeased the 'great priests of the Castle, with other papistes of the Town;' and they soon found ground for trial, inasmuch as he at least would 'have no invocation of saints.'

And so they died the death of the righteous, with courageous words upon their lips even at the stake. 'Be merry, my brethren, and lift up your hearts unto God, for after this sharpe breakfast I trust we shall have a good dinner in the Kingdome of Christ our Lord and redeemer.' And in this hope they passed away 'with such humilitie and stedfastnes,' says Foxe, 'that many which saw their

patient suffering confessed that they could have found in their hearts (at that present) to have died with them.'

One curious result seems to have happened from the martyrdom which those who suffered scarcely dreamt of. The Vicar of Bray was present in the crowd. The sight was too dreadful for his courage, and the mutability of his religious convictions is said to date its origin from the martyr's fires, which he 'found too hot for his tender temper.' The faith that was in these men found no echo in his breast. He had but one ambition—to remain Vicar of Bray through all the changes of that changeful time. He had his wish gratified, and has been historically pilloried accordingly.

Others who showed vacillation of a less marked character also visited Windsor. Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were, after a long imprisonment in the Tower, conveyed to Windsor. But they did not remain long, as they were moved to Oxford, there 'to dispute with divines and learned men ;' and two years later all three had followed the fiery road traversed by the martyrs of Windsor.

Still the town grew and prospered ; and in 1629 its streets were paved, and some attention was paid to cleanliness. 'Dunghills were ordered to be removed from the streets and lanes, as well as other obstructions to the thoroughfare, such as carts, timber, blocks, heaps of stones, or other offensive lumber. Swine were not permitted to wander loose in the market-place, and washing was prohibited in the streets.'* In those good old times decency and order were evidently remarkable by their absence even in the royal borough. Its church suffered many religious vicissitudes. Granted by Richard I. to Waltham Abbey, it remained in their hands until the Dissolution of the monasteries. In Henry VIII.'s reign Windsor Church rejoiced in many 'lights.' Besides that of 'our Lady,' there were those of the Holy Trinity, St. Thomas, St. Stephen, the

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* 'Annals of Windsor,' R. H. Tighe, Esq., and T. E. Davis Esq.

Rood, St. Clement, St. Catherine, St. Anthony, St. James,
St. George, St. Cornelius, and 'our Lady of Pity,' and each
of these had two attendants. But with the Reformation
rapid changes occurred. By 1530 the work of spoliation
had begun, the treasures were one by one sold ; 'the
broken silver of the Rode, and of the Image of St. John the
Baptist, fetching as much as £13 16s ;' while more was got
rid of in the next reign. The Puritanism of the age was
becoming more marked. Fines of 1s. and upwards were
inflicted ; such cases, for example, as 'Clifton's wife for
absence from Church,' 'Vidua Bebe for tippling in service
tyme,' and 'Uxor Caudie for swearing.' But if there was a
tendency to sternness in church matters on the one side,
there was certainly charity on the other. There is some-
thing almost touching about such entries as 'given to 3
poor ministers, 3s. 6d. ;' 'to a poor soldier, 1s. ;' and '2s. to
two merchants' wives, whose husbands were taken slaves in
Turkie ;' and one wonders sympathetically what was the
ultimate fate of the 'two little wenches wch were strangers,'
and who received the magnificent sum of 1s. 6d. As
the civil disturbances became more marked, so in such
church prayers as those for the 'King's safe return,' and
for the 'good success' of Parliament, may be recognised
that unwilling divergence of opinion which was strong in
the hearts of many others besides Falkland. But the
borough at length threw in its lot with the Puritans, and
greater changes still passed over the church. In 1646 the
Committee of the Commons ordered that £50 a year should
be paid for 'the maintenance of such ministers as should
officiate in the Parish Church ;' and certain persons, such
as the Mayor, the Governor of the Castle, and others, were
appointed to nominate them. And they nominated a very
mixed lot ; for among them appear the name of Sir Robert
Bennet, Knight ; Mr. Eayres ; Mr. Starkey, senior ; Captain
Botterell ; and Mr. Brown, butcher. But wandering divines
were not unwelcome, and the frequency of the payments for

hour-glasses, which were the only guides to the preacher as to the length of his sermon, may be due to the vociferous outpourings and vigorous arm-outstretchings of gifted soldiers. A not uncommon and suspicious entry runs side by side with others. 'Item, paid for a pinte of sacke when Mr. Voyce preached, x^d;' this may have had something to do with the broken hour-glass. Fortunately the church plate was entrusted to the Corporation, and with the Restoration was returned to the church. Falling into a dilapidated state in the last century, the church was rebuilt early in the reign of George IV.; and at nearly the same time the new bridge, which replaced the old wooden one over the Thames, was built also.

The restoration of monarchy came in due course. With it came the hanging, drawing, and quartering of the unfortunate regicides, an act which must have thrown a gloom over the advent of the second Charles; and warrants, though not in the way Evelyn probably meant it, his comment on the spectacle: 'Oh! the miraculous providence of God,' he says.

Other equally strange things followed. Mention is made for the first time, and not unfrequently afterwards, of the pillory, ducking-stool, and whipping-post; and on the 2nd July, 1685, there is a notice in the *London Gazette* of 'a great match of cock-fighting at Windsor between two persons of Quality, which continues for that whole week.'

But with these undoubted evils were the gleams of better things. The beginning of that more rapid and intimate communication between the cities of the realm, and which has been productive of increased unity and political strength, arose even in these dark days. The first stage-coaches from Windsor to London must have started about 1673; and the comments of their opponents have had their echoes in every great improvement that has occurred since. The author of a tract, published at the time, says: 'Those coaches hinder the breeding of watermen and

much discourage those that are bred ; for there being stage-coaches set up unto every little town upon the river of Thames, on both sides the water, from London, as high as Windsor and Maidenhead, etc., and so from London-bridge to and below Gravesend, and also to every little town within a mile or two of the water side, these are they who carry all the letters, little bundles, and passengers, which before they set up were carried by water, and kept watermen in a full employment and occasioned their increase (whereof there never was more need than now), and yet, by these coaches they of all others are most discouraged and dejected.'

The same argument—that a reform, being detrimental to a class, should be viewed with disfavour—has been used with railways and steam. The breeding of watermen in this case, and of horses in the other, was not to be ' hindered,' lest the country be urged on the downward path.

History repeats itself over and over again. Ignorance and superstition go ever side by side ; and it is not wonderful to read that shortly after this, in 1686, fifty-four persons of the school and parish of Eton were touched for the King's evil by James II. Nevertheless the following year another step towards progress was made in the establishment of a stand for hackney-coaches on the Castle Hill.

But James and the Stuart dynasty had proved too much for England. Neither the character nor the religion of the King was in accordance with the spirit of the people or the time. He left Windsor on the 18th November, 1688, for Salisbury, where his army was assembling to resist the Prince of Orange, who had landed at Torbay ; but he quickly returned to London, and soon afterwards William of Orange reigned in his stead.

The Windsor Guildhall was erected in this reign ; and, in the market-place outside, the election of representatives by the ' mayor, bailiffs, burgesses, and all the inhabitants paying

scot and lot ' * was openly made until the passing of the Reform Bill, which practically confirmed the then existing institutions. It is a sign of the times, too, that at this date the pillory was removed, and that Temperance Shorren, widow, was made free of the town for a fine of £1 14s. 1d. It is one of the earliest cases of women taking up the freedom.

Little else of interest occurred during the reigns of William, Anne, and the first two Georges ; though Anne liked Windsor, and, living there much, kept the Castle in repair.

She was not unpopular, and her statue and that of Prince George of Denmark were placed to adorn the walls of the Town Hall. The 'effigies' of the Queen is not beautiful, but the words of the inscription are complimentary enough, for Mr. Peisley, the under-steward, tells us that it was erected 'Anno Regni sui VI°. Dom. 1707,' with the inscription, 'Arte tua, Sculptor, non est imitabilis Anna Annæ vis similem sculpere ? Sculpe Deam. S. Chapman Prætore.' This has been translated as follows; but the verse is scarcely borne out either by the statue or the original :

> ' Sculptor ! thy art is vain : it cannot trace
> The semblance of the matchless Anna's grace ;
> Thou may'st as soon to high Olympus fly,
> And carve the model of some deity.'

If these were the views of Mr. Peisley and S. Chapman, mayor, their adulation was not shared by the whole of the burgesses, as appears by an entry in the records of the Court of Common Council, 12th September, fifth year of Queen Anne, 1706. For *sundry members* of the Corporation are called to account and made to apologize for having ' unadvisedly taken upon them to say that the Corporačon was not two pence the better for the Queen's coming to Windsor.' Whether true or not, they were compelled to ' deny all manner of disrespect and undutifulness to be by

* *I.e.*, paying parochial rates.

them intended thereby towards her Sacred Ma^{ty}.' The belief in a divine right of kings was slow in disappearing even in what had been Puritan Windsor. 'Autres temps, autres mœurs' could be applied here as well as in its neighbouring Church of Bray.

There is a curious record about this time in the history of the Castle which will show how slow the practice of the open sale of appointments, which had been common enough during the late Stuarts, was now dying out. Mr. Potts had been Deputy-Governor for many years, and was now ' by age and other Infirmities rendered incapable to perform' his duty. That he should apply for retirement was natural ; but it looks strange, in modern times, to see an ex-official requesting the appointment of his successor (as Mr. Potts does further on in his letter) on the ground that he, Mr. Tho. Olivier, Lieutenant in Major-General Evans's Regiment of Dragoons, had given him a ' sufficient consideration to resign.' There were no pensions for such offices in those days ; and retiring officials may be presumed to have pensioned themselves in this way. The survival of the principle was shown in the purchase of commissions, later on, by officers of the army, and by the over-regulation prices they paid to induce others to retire ; and no doubt the same storm of objection was raised when the purchase of the appointment of the Deputy-Governorship of Windsor Castle was abandoned, as when, 150 years later, the sale of commissions in the army of the State ceased.

Year by year the Castle has become more of a royal residence and less of a fortress, while the town that has grown up around it has changed little. Not so the great forest which forms a part of its history, as it was to some extent its origin. This was due to two causes : first, the natural beauty of its site and its strategical value as covering the fordway at Eton and the shallow or ferry at Datchet ; and secondly, its proximity to the great game-full forest that, in the time of the Conqueror, reached as far south as Chertsey

and Guildford, and west to Hungerford. It is one of the five specially mentioned in 'Domesday;' and, though that part of it in the Kennet Valley was disafforested in 1226, the district east of the Loddon was only partially cleared for many reigns. In fact, the whole of the area occupied by the Eocene strata, and south of a line following the streamlets between Twyford and Bray, was very probably forest or bare heath-land, in which were a few poor villages, up to the time of the Stuarts.

The map executed by Norden, who was employed by James I. to survey the 'Honor of Windsor,' shows this district divided off into 'walkes,' in which the character of the deer, whether red or fallow, is indicated; and the 'Honor' is shown as extending to the line of the Wey as far as Guildford, whence the boundary goes by 'Guild Down' towards the Blackwater, and then follows the course of that river to the Loddon.

Only that part in the angle of the Thames between Bray and Twyford is separately named as the Fines Bayliwick, and is shown as dotted with forest; but a note states that this is 'for the most part inclosed, and is latelie began to be stored with red and fallow deer by Sir H. Neuell.' The roe-deer is only mentioned as 'about 17 Rowe Deere,' which 'lie couertlie, and are hardlie discouered' in Bagshott Parke.

Woodland names are common in the map, such as *Rush* Hills, Hart*hedges*, Crow*thorne*, Hackley *Bushes;* and other names of hills, moors, ponds, and lodges, coupled with the paucity of the roads, show a district that was thinly populated and poor. There is a 'White Cony-borow Hill' in Norden's map of the Great Park, and this may indicate that white rabbits were bred there.

Almost the only continuous roads shown are those from Windsor to Old Windsor and Egham; to Bagshot; to Winckfield, Ockingham, and Reading; and by Bray to Maidenhead and Cookham.

In the northern part is a road from Marlow and Henley; and that from Maidenhead to the west seems to have bifurcated at Littlewick, sending branches to Henley and to Twyford.

Similarly roads are shown joining the Loddon fords at Arborfield, Swallowfield, and Yateley, with Ockingham; but the village of Sandhurst simply covers a ford of the Blackwater, and has a track to 'Wishmoor Cross,' and a road along the stream to the next ford at Blackwater or Bradforde.*

Here and there are shown enclosures named 'parks' or 'rayles,' where deer were especially kept or bred.

During the troubles of the following reign, the deer of the Royal Forest took a share in adding to the distresses of the people.

The Grand Jury of the County of Berks in its petition against ship-money places among its schedule of grievances 'The infinite number of monopolies upon every thing allmost the Countrymen must bye. Besides the easterne part of this Countie, wher your Maties fforest of Windsor is, is particularly burthened with immeasurable inroades of the deare, which if they shall goe on soe for five years will leave neither foode nor roome for any Creatures in the fforest. With rigid execution of forest lawes in ther extremitye, with the exaction of the Imoderate fees by som officers under the Ld. Cheef Justis in Iyre.'†

The 'Little Park' in Norden's time did not extend to the Thames, but lay south of a road from Datchet Ferry to Windsor. This was altered in the present century. The 'Moat' and 'Great' Parks both lay south-west of the Castle, and were separated from it by fields.

In the Great Park, the Long Walk, which terminates with Westmeath's statue of George III. in the unsuitable attire of a Roman toga, was commenced by Charles II., and

* Norden's Map, Harl. MSS., No. 3,749.
† Addl. MSS., Brit. Mus.

finished by William III.; and the Queen's Walk, parallel to it, was planted during the reign of Queen Anne.

The Queen's Walk in the Little Park was made by Elizabeth. Encroachments had previously taken place in many directions; and the boundaries of the different 'Walkes,' even in Norden's time, were so indefinite, that the final enclosure of the forest and waste lands by Act of Parliament in 1813 became essential. Old roads were closed, and new ones opened, giving greater privacy to the royal grounds.

The forest will ever owe its chief interest to the pen of Shakespeare. The drama of the 'Merry Wives of Windsor' lends a picturesque colouring to the close of the stormy era which preceded the reign of the last of the Tudors. That kindly patron of the stage, Queen Elizabeth, saw it first acted in 1593, when Shakespeare was in but his twenty-ninth year. The first edition of 1602 entitles it 'A most pleasaunt and excellent conceited Comedie of Syr John Falstaffe and the Merrie Wives of Windsor,' etc.; but the play in its present form, though acted before James I. in 1604, was not printed until the folio edition of 1623 appeared. The traditional house may still be seen in Windsor, where 'Mine host of the Garter' found the third of the three umpires, the others being 'Master Page, *fidelicit*, Master Page; and there is myself, *fidelicit*, myself.' It stood next the present White Hart Inn. Of its actual existence there is no doubt; for its name appears often in the Churchwarden's Accounts, and 'Mr. Mayor' on his return from London once expended 8s. there. Richard Gallys, Mayor in 1562, and member for the town, on whose brass he is described as 'a gentleman who was learned and liv'd a godly lyfe and was thrice Maior of this Towne of Newe Windsor,' was the occupier of the 'Garter' in 1561, and hence its host.*
'Ford's' house, too, stood opposite, though the actual identity of the person, and that of Page also, is impossible.

* Ashmole.

Still, the name of *Fforde* appears several times in the parish register of the end of that century and the beginning of the seventeenth ; and in 1623 were buried 'Richard Page' and 'Anne Ford.'

The actual features of the neighbourhood have altered much, owing to the enclosures and improvements that have taken place. A road led from the south side of the town close to the Castle grounds, and so to Frogmore and Old Windsor; it was known as 'Moor Street' till 1851. Another 'right of way' existed in olden time from the north side of the town along that edge of the then 'Little Park' to Datchet Ferry. So that when 'mine host' directs 'Master Guest, and Master Page, and eke Cavalero Slender to go *through the town to Frogmore,*' he apparently indicated the then main road, bordered with trees and hedges, which left the south entrance of Windsor for Staines ; while he himself took the Doctor *by the field road on the north of the Castle* to

'Go about the fields with me through Frogmore ; I will bring thee where Mistress Anne Page is, at a farm-house, a feasting : and thou shalt woo her.'

Along these very fields, too, may the gallant Sir John Falstaff have been carried, when Mrs. Ford directed her servants :

'Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard by in the brewhouse ; and when I suddenly call you, come forth (without any pause or staggering), take this basket on your shoulders : that done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whitsters in Datchet-mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch, close by the Thames side.'

For the 'muddy ditch' close by the Thames-side still ran through Datchet Mead in Anne's reign, when it entered the river about 400 yards above the ferry, and was known as 'Hoghole.'

Here it was where

'The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drowned a bitch's blind puppies, fifteen i' the litter : and

you may know by my size, that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking ; if the bottom were as deep as hell I should down. I had been drowned, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow ; a death that I abhor ; for the water swells a man ; and what a thing should I have been, when I had been swelled ! I should have been a mountain of mummy.'

But it will be vain to seek for that oak where,—

> ' An old tale goes, that Herne the Hunter,
> Sometime a keeper here in Windsor Forest,
> Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight,
> Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns ;
> And there he blasts the tree, and takes the cattle ;
> And makes milch-kine yield blood, and shakes a chain
> In a most hideous and dreadful manner :
> You have heard of such a spirit ; and well you know,
> The superstitions idle-headed eld
> Received, and did deliver to our age,
> This tale of Herne the Hunter for a truth.'

Whether Herne ever lived as keeper of the forest in the reign of Elizabeth is more than doubtful, and no allusion to the legend exists except in Shakespeare's play. All that is known is that ' Rycharde *Horne*, yeoman,' was examined as one of the hunters, for hunting in his Majesty's forests, when Henry VIII. was king. So that the quaint story of the 'merry wives' has localized a certainly obscure tradition in the near neighbourhood of Windsor.*

Herne's oak is first shown as ' Sir John Falstaff's oak ' in Collier's map of the Little Park, in 1742, in Queen Elizabeth's Walk ; and by it is indicated a pit or undulation of the ground.

It was in this that the fairy Queen, ' sweet Anne Page,' with her fairies were ' couched hard by Herne's oak, with obscure lights ; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.'

It has been partially filled up, owing to the carelessness and indifference of those who completed the present alterations ; though it can still be recognised by the thorn trees

* ' Annals of Windsor.'

planted there. But of Herne's oak there is now no trace. It died in 1790, and was destroyed six years later; and though to a dead and withered tree is still attached the story, it is but a counterfeit. The oak, as shown from undoubted pictures, was a 'pollard,' and huge; that now marked is a *maiden* tree, and small. All the oldest known trees near the dell have had their tops lopped at one time or the other.*

On the borders of the forest, by the road to Bagshot, is the racecourse of Ascot, which, together with its approaches, was directed by Parliament to be 'kept and continued as a racecourse for the public use at all times.'

The races are of no great antiquity, having been founded by the Duke of Cumberland, uncle of George III., the breeder of the famous racehorse Eclipse.

The Duke, finding that from the time of Charles II. 'racing had languished, perhaps from want of more support from the Crown and higher aristocracy,' revived it. 'This was not effected without an immensity of expense, and an incredible succession of losses to the sharks, Greeks, and blacklegs of the time, by whom H.R.H. was surrounded and, of course, incessantly pillaged. Having, however, the military maxim of "Persevere and conquer," he was not deterred from the object of his pursuit till he became possessed of the best stock, best blood, and most numerous stud in the kingdom.'†

Whether this revival was worth the expense and trouble is a question that posterity will settle for us. It is by no means impossible to imagine a generation arising that would relegate the sport to the obscurity whence the Royal Duke removed it. Other popular amusements, such as cock-fighting at Windsor on the one side, and the bull-baiting at Wokingham on the other side of the great racecourse, have had their day and have gone without regret, and a

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* 'Annals of Windsor.' † *Quarterly Review.*

time may come when the Ascot Meeting too will be gathered among the perished sports.

Like pugilism, both cock-fighting and bull-baiting had their devoted adherents, both had their prophets who foresaw the downfall of the country with the downfall of their favourite recreation ; and history will repeat itself, no doubt.

Virginia Water also owes its construction and adornment to the Georges, for both the Duke of Cumberland and George IV. delighted in its beauties.   But they were created, none the less, at the expense of other things and places; for the stones of an ancient cromlech which is said to have stood on Bagshot Heath were utilized for its cascade, and the so-called temple is formed from Roman fragments brought from the African coast near Tunis.

There are few other places of general interest in the old forest area.   On the Wokingham road the first place of note is Clewer (Cleworth).   Its Church of St. Andrew has a curious brass referring to a contest between the men of this village and that of Bray.*   It states that

> ' He that lyeth under this stone,
>   Shot with one hundred men, himself alone.
>   This is true that I doe say,
>   The match was shot at Oldfield, at Bray.
>   I will tell you before you goe hence,
>   That his name was Martyne Expence.'

Nothing more is known of him ; but he did his duty, and apparently not without self-satisfaction.

Its other church—that of St. Stephen, built in 1874— was built for a Protestant, or rather Anglican, Convent for ladies, to which a reformatory is attached.   Farther on is the Park of Easthampstead, holding once an ancient house, long since destroyed, which was a royal residence. Richard II. used it as a hunting-box in 1381 ; Queen

* Murray's ' Handbook,' p. 27.

Katharine of Aragon was occupying it in 1531, when the King, her husband, sent some of the members of his Council to persuade her to agree to a divorce ; and James I. resided here in the summers of 1622 and 1623.

The only town in the forest, with the municipality of an alderman and eleven burgesses, is that of Woking-ham, Oakingham, or Ockingham. Its principal claim to notice is that, owing to the bequest of an enthusiast who thought all things were permanent, bull-baiting was annually kept up until about 1840. This George Staverton, in 1661, left a house for the purpose of buying a bull to be baited and killed at Christmas, the meat of which fed the poor and the sale of its offal gave them shoes. Thus evil was done that good might come. Round its inn, too, 'The Rose,' gathers the celebrated story in which Gay, Swift, Pope, and Arbuthnot, detained here by stress of weather, amused themselves by immortalizing in a poem the charms of the daughter of the landlord. Yet notwithstanding her beauty, and the fact that she had an ill-used lover, who died of love at the early age of twenty-seven in the old Manor House of Arborfield, described in 'Our Village' under the name of 'The Old House at Aberleigh,' she remained a spinster for sixty-seven years. The pining lover was the last heir male of the Standens of Arbor-field.* Wokingham Church contains a monument to a native of the town, Bishop Godwin of Wells, who died in 1590.

The Northern road from Windsor probably runs near that which was formed by the junction of the British track from Old Windsor Ferry and that from Egham Wick and Staines, which met at St. Leonard's Hill. Roman remains and bronze implements point to early occupation at the meeting of the ancient roads. A bronze lamp found there forms the crest of the Society of Antiquaries, and the Roman site became that of a chantry or hermitage dedi-

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* Murray's 'Handbook.'

cated to St. Leonard. Thence, following the high land, the Windsor road continued to Bray Wick.

This village of Bray has, like Farringdon, given its name to a Hundred; and though it has never occupied a promi-nent position it may, like Speen, have the interest attaching to a possible Roman origin. It may have been Bibracte,* though there are no traces of buildings to identify it; but coins and other relics show that there was a line of traffic here in Roman times. Nothing more strikingly points out the very superficial character of the Roman holding than the utter disappearance of the majority of its towns. They were not of the Britons' choosing, and so they burnt them and went their way. Silchester is a farm, Speen a tiny hamlet, Thamesis little better; and if Bray be Bibracte, it has stood still too. Other places prospered; but the bulk of the Roman occupation sites never did. Bray belonged to the Confessor before the Conquest, where there was a Saxon church, of which Reinbald was priest; and many of the local land-tenures date far back to these and early feudal days. Thus it was held by ' Werkland,' whereby the holder had to do some proportion of work on the lord's land; by ' Akerman ' service, when the tenant paid ' 2s. 6d. rent; and the service belonging to that tenure—namely, that on his death a pig value 12d. was due to the lord for a heriot.'

The ancient Saxon church was taken down in 1293, when the ' Early-English ' building was erected, to which 'Decorated' work has since been added. It was ornamented in diaper and fresco, and, till the present century, had the carved-oak rood-screen intact. It is chiefly noteworthy for its changeable vicar, whose Protestant communion-table is still shown; and there are brasses to some of the Norreys family who once occupied the old Manor House of Ockholt.† ' This Vicar of Bray, when King Henry VIII.

* Bibracte, in France, has been corrupted into Bray. (' Topog. Descrip. Berks.')

† *Vide* p. 247.

shook off the Papal supremacy, preached in the most zealous manner against the innovations and encroachments made by the Court of Rome; and when the Five Articles were published, he vindicated idolatry with all the strength of prostituted logic. In the reign of Edward VI., when the Protestant religion was established by Act of Parliament, the vicar renounced all his former principles and became a strenuous advocate of the Reformation. On the accession of Queen Mary he again vindicated the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and became a zealous Papist, inveighing with great acrimony against all those worthy persons who abhorred the Romish religion. He enjoyed his benefice until the reformed religion was established in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when he once more changed with the times, and enjoyed his vicarage till his death.'

Thus he was merely a one-idea'd man, and his creed was very simple and entirely comprehensible. 'I have always kept,' he says, 'my principle, which is this—to live and die the Vicar of Bray.'

> ' To teach my flock I never missed,
>   Kings were by God appointed ;
> And they are damned who dare resist
>   Or touch the Lord's anointed.
> And this is law I will maintain
>   Until my dying day, sir,
> That, whatsoever king shall reign,
>   I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir.'

Certainly he acted up to his principles. Through the varied religious conditions of the reign of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, he maintained his vicarage and changed his views with the prevailing creed. With his 'cure of souls' he could have had but little real sympathy, though he must from time to time have appealed to each section in turn. From Papist to Protestant,

from Protestant to Papist, and from Papist to Protestant again, he fully carried out the view of being all things to all men.

He was not the only clergyman who was thus remarkable. The records of West Ilsley tell of two others. Antonio de Dominis, Archbishop of Spalatro, was converted to Protestantism, and on flying to England was made Vicar there by James I. in 1616. He preached much against his former faith, as most such converts do; but, dissatisfied at being made only Dean of Windsor, he recanted, on promise of pardon from Gregory XV., and returning to Rome was imprisoned, under the orders of the Inquisition, in the Castle of St. Angelo, where he died in 1625.

His successor, Dr. Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester, was a devoted adherent of the Church and of the cause of Charles I., who visited him at his rectory in 1644; but he, notwithstanding, trimmed to the varying fortunes of the time by dedicating a 'Discourse on the Trinity' to Puritan Cromwell. But he did not go far enough; for, refusing to sign the Seventeen Canons of Doctrine and Discipline, he 'was spoiled, plundered, and utterly undone,' and sought refuge within the bosom of the Church of Rome, being, as Fuller says, though it is hard to sympathize with him in his tenderness for the versatile vicar, through the 'vile and detestable practice of those who engross to themselves the name of Protestants . . . scandalized into Popery.'

All that can be said of him is that he tried to play the game of his cleverer brother of Bray, and did not succeed.

A small chantry to the Virgin, which stood near the Church of Bray, was converted into a school-house, and the churchyard possesses a fine lych-gate with rooms over it, one of the timbers of which bears the date of 1448.

Archery meetings were held here in Elizabeth's time. The Volunteers of Bray challenged the Company of Clewer, and Martyne Expence carried off the laurels of the day, as

appears by the inscription on his tombstone in Clewer Church.*

Two ancient and winding (possibly Romanized) British trackways must have led north from Bray by Maidenhead Thicket to Cookham, and so north to High Wycombe, and west to Reading. The former must have gone very close to the Manor House of Ockwells (or Ockholt) that was built by Sir John Norris in 1466.

The manor itself had been originally granted, in 1267, to Richard de Norreys, the cook of Queen Eleanor, wife of Henry III.; but it does not appear that any building preceded that now in existence. It is quaintly gabled, with much old oak carving, and contains a large oak-wainscoted hall, with a musicians' gallery at the end, and a deep square-bayed window extending almost from the ground to the roof. This at one time contained much stained glass, on which the arms of Henry VI., with antelopes as supporters; of Queen Margaret, with the antelope and eagle; those of Norreys, with the beaver, and their motto, ' Feythfully serve ;' as well as those of the Abbeys of Westminster and Abingdon, the Beauforts of Somerset, the Earl of March, Henry Duke of Warwick, the De la Poles, Dukes of Sussex, and others.

It remained in the Norreys family till 1786, and is now the property of Mr. Grenfell of Taplow Court.

There is a quaint legend told of Hawthorn Hill in the neighbouring Manor of Crutchfield. A certain man who dwelt near there (how long ago the story sayeth not) dreamed on three consecutive occasions that some one appeared to him, and told him that if he would but go to London Bridge he would ' hear of something to his advantage.' Being of an unsuspicious and confiding nature, he obeyed the ghostly visitant ; and while looking around him on the great city he was accosted by a London tradesman, who found out his errand. He gravely warned him of

the futility of trusting to the pleasant visions of dreamland, for that he himself had dreamt a similar dream, recommending him to go and dig on *Hawthorn Hill*, where *he*, in his turn, would find 'something to *his* advantage.' Of course, even if he knew the place, which he didn't, he would not go, he said ; and so the Berkshire man returned home, and himself dug up the pot of money on the hill he knew so well. But this was not all. On the pot were certain strange characters. These, after a while, some Oxford scholars drinking at his inn, for he was a publican, deciphered, and they ran thus :

'Beneath the place where this pot stood,
There is another twice as good.'

Needless to say the favourite of fortune and of dreams carried out the will of the original depositor. Like Gil Blas of Santillane he found the 'soul' of a possible licentiate in yet another hoard, and therefore changed the name of his inn from the 'Woodman' to the 'Money-Pot.'* The Treasury did not trouble about treasure-trove apparently, or perhaps never heard of it in those days.

Maidenhead,† at the junction of the Bray-Cookham track-way with that from Twyford to Taplow, is said to have been originally named South Arlington or Sudlington. The tradition as to its taking its name from the head of a British virgin, one of the 11,000 who were martyred with St. Ursula at Cologne, is of course without foundation ; for the legend probably arose from the death of two ladies, Ursula and Undecimilla, the latter name being taken to mean 'undecima mille,' eleven thousand, rather than a

* Hundred of Bray. Rev. C. Kerry.

† Called Maidenhuth in 1288, and Maydenhead in 1500. Partly derived from 'hithe,' a wharf for timber. See note on 'Culhamhithe,' in account of Abingdon, where it seems to have been used to express a 'ferry.' It may have been, also, partly derived from the 'Mai dun,' or great hill of Taplow, on the opposite bank.

proper name. It was first incorporated in 1351, under the name of the Fraternity or Guild of the Brothers and Sisters of Maidenhythe, and again in the reign of James II. by the style of the Mayor, Bridge-master, and Burgesses.

Its bridge is one of the most ancient in Berkshire, if the statement that there was a grant for its repair in 1298 be true ; but Camden says that it was not erected till 1460, when it took the place of the ferry at 'Babham End,' near Cookham, by which then ran a branch of the Great Western road. A hollow way, much overgrown, marks the line taken by the latter up Clieveden Hill.

But whatever date may be attached to it, it was a wooden bridge on piles, for the repair of which the Corporation was allowed three oak-trees annually from the forests of Windsor. It was replaced by a stone bridge in 1772, and conveyed one of the Western roads, though not the most important. Its neighbourhood was, so Leland says, 'infested with robbers for 5 miles in extent.'

So dangerous was the 'thicket' to the west of the town in 1255 that orders were given to widen the road through the great *firth** between Maidenhead and Twyford.

Even as late as Elizabeth's days the Vicar of Henley, who served the cure at Maidenhead, 'was allowed an extra salary to atone for the danger of passing' through the thicket. The robbers were not respecters of persons, and, like Robin Hood, robbed a fat priest as well as a lean layman.

The name of 'Robin Hood's Arbour' near here may be a curious corruption of a 'cold harbour,'† which had survived the Roman times to be added to the name of a notorious popular robber, and modified to its present form.

There is a tradition that 'James I., when hunting one day, rode on before his hounds to search for luncheon, and came to the inn at Maidenhead; but the landlord lamented

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* *Ffriedd* (pronounced *frith*) is Welsh for a wild district.

† *Vide* p. 51.

that he had nothing left in his house, for the Vicar of Bray and his curate were upstairs, and had ordered all that there was, but perhaps they would allow him to join them. King James went upstairs and asked permission, which was glumly given by the vicar, but cordially by the curate. All dinner-time the King told so many stories that he made them roar with laughter. At last came the bill, when the King, searching his empty pockets, protested that he had left his purse behind him, and could not pay ; upon which the vicar angrily protested that he would not pay for him, but the curate expressed his pleasure in being able to make some return for the amusement he had given them. The bill paid, they all went out upon the balcony, when the huntsmen, riding into the town, and seeing the King, went down upon one knee in the street, as was then the custom. The vicar, overwhelmed with confusion, flung himself at the King's feet, and implored forgiveness, to which the King replied, 'I shall not turn you out of your living, and you shall always remain Vicar of Bray ; but I shall make the curate a Canon of Windsor, whence he will be able to look down both upon you and your vicarage.'*

It was at the Greyhound Inn of Maidenhead that Charles I. met his children in 1647, and thence went to Caversham, where they stayed two days together.

Turning back to Bray again, the churches of White Waltham, Shottesbrooke, St. Lawrence Waltham, Rush-combe, and Twyford, mark approximately the line of the ancient road to the westward from Bray.

White Waltham is unimportant ; but Mr. Bower was vicar here till 1644, after sixty-seven years of pastorate. He had somewhat similar, though less pro-nounced, feelings than his brother of Bray ; or, at least, entertained an equally lofty opinion of the position of the Sovereign. In preaching before Elizabeth, he addressed

* Murray's 'Handbook,' p. 85.

her first as 'my royal,' and then as 'my noble' Queen, which caused her Majesty to say, 'What! am I ten groats worse than I was?' Overcome by the remark, he never again preached a sermon; but read a homily, possibly to the greater benefit of his congregation than heretofore. Near this was an ancient manor-house, once occupied by Henry VII.'s son, Arthur.

Shottesbrooke Church, situated in 'a manor that was owned by Alward the goldsmith, in Rufus's time, under the tenure of providing charcoal to make the Crown and Regalia, is of pure Decorated architecture, and was built in 1337 by Sir William Tressell. The latter's tomb is in the N. transept, and is surmounted by a richly-wrought canopy of Gothic arches. The body is said, by Hearne, to be 'wrapt up in lead, with his wife in leather at his feet;' and his daughter Margaret, Lady Pembrugge, lies near him under a slab with a good brass. Sir R. Powle was buried here in 1678, as also was Sir T. Noke, 'who, for his great age and virtuous life, was reverenced by all men, and commonly called Father Noke.' Lady Hoby, of Bisham, the sister of Lady Bacon and Lady Burleigh, wrote his Latin epitaph.

There is a local tradition that when the builder was laying the last stone on the top of the spire, he called for wine to drink the King's health, and after drinking it he fell to the ground, was dashed to pieces, and was buried on the spot. Over him was placed a stone with his last interjection, 'O! O!' as the sole inscription. Neither Rushcombe nor St. Lawrence Waltham are of importance, except to notice that the large number of Roman coins found at the latter place identify it as a British-Roman occupation site.*

Thus in the valleys of the Thames and Ock similar points have been successively occupied. This was not a matter of accident. Places originate and grow for well-

* 'Coins at Lawrence Waltham; Hundred of Bray,' pp. 154, 187.

known reasons. Thus Wantage, at the junction of the Portway, the Ickleton Street, and the Hungerford track, was British and Saxon, and nothing more. Farringdon grew up where five roads meet, and was British and Saxon ; and, sharing slightly in the Norman and Stuart wars, had a little longer history.

Both these places, then, are at the union of many roads, and owe their existence to this fact only.

Abingdon and Wallingford were British, Saxon, and the last certainly Roman holdings ; both were also mediæval. While the one began to rise because of its Abbey, the other rose because of its Castle. Both shared fully in the troubles of the Civil Wars, and both continued to exist as towns because they covered bridges on the Thames to which many roads necessarily converged. Their growth is therefore partly due to geographical, partly to political causes ; and the history of Wallingford is the more continuous of the two because of its ancient bridge, which carried at one time the bulk of the Western trade. Abingdon has a history beyond the death of the Abbey which created it, because of its more modern bridges, made by the energy of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, which drew through it some of the Western traffic.

Lastly, Bray, with its offshoot, modern Maidenhead, and Old Windsor, with its new offspring, modern Windsor, are to some extent British, Roman, and Saxon, but share little in their stories. Bray ceased to be important when the Roman lines of communication which had created it were abandoned ; and Maidenhead would have been but a ferry and a timber-wharf on the borders of the robber-infested forest but for its thirteenth—or more probably fifteenth—century bridge.

Similarly Old Windsor died, as Wantage did, with the disuse of its Saxon palace ; and New Windsor grew up with its Castle, and had at first no other *raison d'être.* Its origin was therefore political, and its existence is largely

so still. But with the construction of its bridges its history became general rather than special, and it ceased to be the mere cluster of houses, sheltered under the Castle walls, to hold and supply the retainers thereof.

Thus along the valley of the Thames, the only ancient holdings that live as towns and until lately returned Members to Parliament are those which, in the earliest times as well as now, kept ward over the fords and bridges of the stream.

Turning to the valley of the Kennet, the same principle applies. Along its course Newbury and Reading certainly covered fordways. Other places may have done so in later days, but never continuously in early times.

Newbury's history is chiefly that of the Civil Wars, though it may be classed among the most ancient towns in Berkshire with regard to its origin. It seems probable that the original situation of the British hamlet was on the heights north-west of the present town, on the upland of Speen.

In those early days the forest area, extending from Windsor to Hungerford, doubtless occupied the whole of the Kennet and Lambourne Valleys to the lower slopes of the Wickham ridge, as the presence of tree-remains in the peat proves, and a narrow trackway wound through it, uniting Wash Common on the south with the high land on the north, where stood the Celtic village of Speen.

This point, commanding the only passage of the forest and the Middle Kennet, was occupied by the Romans, as pottery, coins, and tiles have been found in the grounds of Mr. Wyld's house there, though no distinct traces of either the British or Roman vallum now remain. It was merely at first one of the small 'castra stativa,' which held a Roman outpost to overawe the subdued districts ; and thence, as the county became civilized, may well have been transferred to the present site of Newbury.[*]

[*] W. Money, F.S.A.

Its name of Speen is undoubtedly derivable from *Spinæ*, the Latin name for the station that must have stood, at any rate, near here ; and the presence of ancient rose-brambles and thorn-trees, the latter common in many old occupation sites, would give colour to this view.*

Furthermore, the discovery, many years since, of a Roman cemetery near the present railway-station of New-bury seems to point to the final transference of the Roman holding to the fordway of the river itself.†

The neighbourhood was wooded even in Saxon times, for ' Deen's Wood ' and ' Wood Speen ' are survivals of the existence of ancient forests ; and King Cynewulf gave as a hunting-chase to Abbot Bethune of Abingdon 'all the wood which is called Spene.'

But whatever village existed there had fallen into in-significance, compared with the town that Saxon Ulward in the Confessor's days possessed on the Kennet. It pos-sessed fifty-one *hagæ*, when Reading had but twenty-nine ; and in the Norman survey Ulward's town became *Uluritone*, the town of Ernulf de Hesdin ; while *Spone*, the 'vil,' and Bagnore, in the hundred of *Taccham*, became the appanage of Hunfrid Vis de Leu.‡

Soon it became Newberie§—possibly when the Castle was built by the new possessors of the town, the Norman Earls of Perche ; and then it passed to William of Pem-broke, the Earl Marshal, and eventually to the Crown.

John frequently visited it from his palace at Freemantle Park, near Kingsclere, and is even said to have taken refuge in the house of a poor spinning-woman when pursued by his insurgent Barons. Be that as it may, he built the alms-

* ' In the Midland and Eastern counties the term "spinney," as applied to a wild underwood, or coppice, probably has the same deriva-tion.'—Godwin.

† ' Typog. Descrip. Berks.'   ‡ ' History of Newbury.'

§ Variously spelt : in the reign of John, Neubury and Neubiry ; Edward IV., Nubury ; Henry VI., Newebury ; Elizabeth, Newbery and Newberye.

houses of St. Bartholomew, and furnished it with a chapel and priest's house, near which a piece of ground called the ' Litten ' long marked the site of a place of the dead by its Saxon name.

Its Castle was the scene of one stout siege, in which King Stephen took it by assault ; but it does not appear to have been put to further military use, and even its site is doubtful. It was connected with the insurrection of Tyler, in which Richard of Wallingford took so prominent a part ; for in 1450 one of the ' quarters ' of Ramsay, a principal leader, was spiked on the gateway of the Royal Castle.* Among other persons to whom the Manor of Newbury was granted were Queen Jane Seymour and Anne of Denmark, as a jointure.

The neighbouring Manors of Wood Spene and Benham Valence, which had taken its name from Valence, Earl of Pembroke, its possessor, in 1250, were united in the hands of John Baptist de Castillion in 1565, by the gift of them to him from Elizabeth, because of ' his faithful services ;' and these finally were purchased by the Earls of Craven in 1630, whose descendant, in 1775, occupied Benham Place with his wife, the Margravine of Anspach. Both she and Castillion lie in the old church of Speen— the knight in an altar tomb, on which his armoured effigies rests ; and the lady under a monument that Canova designed.

Newbury had become a flourishing seat of the cloth trade in the fifteenth century, and produced two men of note who may be reckoned among the chief worthies of the town. These were John Winchcombe and Thomas Dolman.

To the latter was granted in 1557 the Manor of Shaw ; and either he or his son built in 1581 the stately Elizabethan mansion which took so prominent a part in the second battle of Newbury. He seems also to have held land in Speen ; but beyond being a knighted sheriff

* Trans. N. D. F. C., vol. ii., p. 242.

of Berks in 1588, neither he nor his descendants, several of whom were also knighted, seem to have left any mark on the county history.

He was not so successful as his rival clothier Winchcombe, nor did he leave so good a name behind, if the doggrel of his time is to be believed, which runs:

> 'Lord, have mercy on us, miserable sinners,
> Thomas Dolman has built a new house, and turn'd away all his spinners.'

He was little affected by the opinions of others apparently, for over his portico he placed the motto, '$\phi\theta o\nu\epsilon\rho\dot{o}s$ $\mu\eta\delta\epsilon\grave{\imath}s$ $\epsilon\ddot{\imath}\sigma\iota\tau\omega$;' and over the window above of the porch the retort to the above couplet:

> 'Edentulus vescentium dentibus invidet,
> Et oculos caprarum talpa contemnit.'

Sir Thomas Dolman, Clerk of the Privy Council, and M.P. for Reading in 1661, and who was owner of the house during the Civil War, fought by the side of the King in his own garden during the second battle of Newbury. For this he was knighted; and from some episode of the fight, the family motto of the Dolmans became:

> ' "King and law !"
> Shouts Dolman of Shaw.'

At length the house, like so many other Berkshire properties, fell into feminine hands, and so was purchased by the Duke of Chandos, until it finally came into the hands of Mr. Eyre.

It was little damaged during the Civil War; and the only trace of its having been under fire is the heap of cannon-balls that have been found at times in the garden, and the hole in the wainscoting of the east bow-window, which tradition says was made by a shot aimed at Charles I. It is difficult to tell from which direction it was fired; but the hole is guarded by a brass plate, on which is inscribed: 'Hanc juxta fenestram, Rex Carolus

primus, instante obsidione scloppopetræ ictu tantum non trajectus fuit. Die Octob. xxvii., MDCXLIV.'

The story of John Smallwode or Winchcombe is more extensive. 'Jack of Newbury' was a poor clothier, who, by his energy, raised himself to be one of the largest employers of labour in the county. He kept 100 looms at work in his house, each managed by a man and a boy; and when the Scotch invaded England in the reign of Henry VIII., he mustered fifty mounted men and fifty pikemen for the service of the King, 'as well armed and better clothed than any.'

The latter statement is not astonishing; and it is to be hoped that the ballad of the 'Newberrie Archers' does not overrate the value of their exploits on the hard-fought field of Flodden.

Henry VIII. and Queen Katherine visited the gallant clothier on the return of the former from France, and were royally feasted in the house, which is now an inn. Henry would have knighted him, but he declined the honour. He had a greater object in view than that; for he was a champion of free trade. He petitioned that 'by reason of the wars many merchant strangers were prohibited from coming to England; and also our merchants, in like sort, were forbidden to have dealings with France and the Low Countries.'

Chancellor Wolsey would not listen to him. He thought that 'Jack of Newbury, if well examined, would be found to be infected with Luther's spirit.' So he was, as far as energy and determination and a certain habit of plain speaking went. He liked not the delays in pushing his suit; so he answered the Cardinal's menacing remark by the harder and even less courteous rejoinder that 'if my Lord Chancellor's father had been no hastier in killing calves than he in despatching poor men's suits, I think he would never have worn a mitre.'

Jack's persistency, and probably his previous helpfulness

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and hospitality to the King, gained its reward. The clothiers got the order 'that merchants should freely traffic with one another, and the proclamation thereof should be made as well on the other side of the sea as the land.'

So he prospered, and his descendants after him. He largely contributed to the re-building of the parish church, in which he directed by will in 1519 that he should be buried with his wife, and a 'stone to be layde upon us bothe.' The brass thereon contains the inscription : 'Off yo charitie pray for the soule of John Smalwode als Winchcom and Alys his wyfe. John dyed the xv day of February, A°· dm. M°CCCCC°XIX.' 'He was the most considerable clothier (without fancy or fiction) England ever beheld.'*

When Queen Elizabeth visited the town during her many 'progresses,' she seems to have lodged with the son of the great manufacturer, to whom was granted in 1539 the estate of Bucklebury, where, in 1540, he built a house, and where his widow lived after his death. Strutt, in his 'Habits of the People of England,' thus speaks of her : 'She came out of the kitchen in a fair train gowne, stuck full of silver pins, having a white cap upon her head with cuts of curious needle work under the same, and an apron before her as white as driven snow.' Her wedding-dress is also specified in the same history in the following manner : 'The bride being habited in a gowne of sheep's russet and a kirtle of fine worsted, her head attired with a biliment of gold, and her hair as yellow as gold hanging down behind her, which was curiously combed and plaited according to the manner of those days, was led to church between two boys with bride laces and rosemary tied about their silken sleeves.'

The maidens employed in spinning are prettily described in the following lines in the book just referred to :

* Fuller's Worthies.

'And in a chamber close beside
Two hundred maidens did abide,
In petticoats of stainsmet red,
And milk-white kerchers on their head.
Their smock-sleeves like to winter snow,
That on the western mountains blow,
And each sleeve with a silken band
Was fairly tied at the hand.
These pretty maids did never lin,
But in the place all day did spin.'

The Tudor mansion was pulled down in 1833, when a subterranean passage was discovered, and some traces of ancient architecture. The last heir male of the Winchcombes, Sir Henry, died in 1703, leaving daughters, one of whom, the Lady Frances, founded a charity school in the village of Thatcham in 1707, and married Lord Bolingbroke. His friend Swift visited him, and wrote, as was his wont, to Stella : ' Mr. Secretary was a perfect countrygentleman at Bucklebury. He smoked tobacco with one or two neighbours ; he inquired after the wheat in such a field ; he went to visit his hounds, and knew all their names. He and his lady saw me up to my chamber just in the country-fashion. His house is just in the midst of £3,000 a year he had by his lady, who is descended from Jack of Newbury, of whom books and ballads are written, and there is an old picture of him in the room.'

Another of Sir Henry's daughters married John Packer, Clerk of the Privy Seal, and secretary to George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham, who owned the Castle of Donnington during its famous siege.

The church that the founder of this great and useful family restored, and the tower of which he is said to have built, contains other monuments of interest. Here were buried Sir John Wayle, the last Roman Catholic vicar of the old time ; Dr. Whyte, the first Protestant rector ; and then the son of another Newbury clothier, Dr. Twisse, writer and divine, and also chaplain to the

daughter of James I. He had all the energy of the leaders of the craft at which his father worked, and lost all his property from taking the losing side during the civil troubles.

Benjamin Woodbridge, the first Nonconformist minister, was equally in earnest. He was a fierce opponent of Sansonists and Quakers, whom, with quaint inconsistency, he classed with Turks or infidels. They did not protest more than he did. Though disestablished on the Restoration, he still preached privately till 1672, when the Act of Indulgence released him, and he died in peace at Englefield in 1684.

Joseph Sayer, who succeeded him, was another determined man. He was minister from 1666 to 1674; and when the Five-Mile Act of 1665 was passed, he had the ground measured so as to be sure.*

Whichever side they took, there was a grim unforgiving earnestness about these good men of Newbury.

They had proved it before this. There were sects of 'faithful favourers' here in the early part of Henry VIII.'s reign ; and though undisturbed for fifteen years, they were then betrayed, and three or four were burnt, while 'six or seven score' were abjured.†

Christopher Shoemaker, one of them, tried to improve a certain John Hay by reading the Bible to him in 1518. His motives were good, and courage undoubted ; but he, also, was burnt therefor.

Julinus or Julius Palmer, Fellow of Magdalen College in the reign of Edward VI., had been so strong a Catholic at Oxford as to assist at the burning of the bishops. The effect of the scene, or true conviction, made him change his views. He became as stout a Protestant, and took the mastership of the school at Reading ; but resigned it, to return to it later with his Catholic mother's curse. He was imprisoned then at Reading, and charged with treason and sedition ;

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* 'Hist. of Newbury.'   † Ibid.

but these could not be proved, so they tried the likelier charge of heresy, under Dr. Jeffrey, who held a visitation at Newbury on the 15th July, 1556. Of course, his trial was a fraud, and his judge had pre-judged him ; and now let Foxe, the historian of English martyrs, tell his own tale :

' When they were come to the place where they should suffer, they all 3 fell to the ground ; and Palmer, with an audible voice, pronounced the 31st Psalm, but the other 2 made their prayers secretly to God . . . . and so forthwith they put off their raiment, and went to the stake and kissed it. And when they were bound to the post, Palmer said, " Good people, pray for us that we may persevere to the end ; and, for Christ's sake, beware of Popish teachers, for they deceive you." As he spake this a servant of one of the bailiffs threw a faggot at his face, that the blood gushed out in divers places. For the which fact the sheriff reviled him, calling him cruel tormentor ; and with his walking staff brake his head, that the blood likewise ran about his ears. When the fire was kindled and began to take hold upon their bodies, they lift up their hands towards heaven, and quietly and cheerily, as though they had felt no smart, they cried, " Lord Jesu strengthen us ; Lord Jesu assist us ; Lord Jesu receive our souls !" And so they continued, without any struggling, holding up their hands, and knocking their hearts, and calling upon Jesu, until they had ended their mortal lives.'*

They died, as John Winchcombe would have died, true to their convictions.

The town had other royal visitors besides Elizabeth, in whose reign it was still of such importance as to furnish for the Scotch War 1,500 men, while Reading only provided 1,000, ' besides other rascals.' Here passed James I. with his Queen, who unmasked to please the cheering people. Charles I. visited it during the first battle of

* ' Hist. of Newbury.'

Newbury, as did Charles II. after he became King; and here came Cromwell, afterwards the Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England. But with the decline of the clothing trade the importance of Newbury fell too. Its chief interest lies in the prominent part it took in the Civil War; but when these days passed Newbury subsided into a quiet county town, where its inn, the Pelican, drew from Quin the lines that—

> ' The famous Inn at Speenhamland,
>   That stands below the Hill,
> May well be called the Pelican,
>   From its enormous Bill.'

The bridge over the Kennet which led there was of wood until 1770, when it was built of stone.

For all the early part of the county history, it was the chief town in the valley of the Kennet, for it was a great manufacturing centre for clothing, and nine great roads converged on its permanent bridge. As time went on, canals improved its communications, and then a railway; and with the new north and south line it may once more return to its original important position, that of the meeting of lines of traffic from the north and south as well as the east and west.

The valley of the Kennet contains much of historical interest besides the town of Ulward.

The Manor of Kintbury, the Chenetberie of the Survey, deriving its name from the ancient *Beorgh* by the Kennet, belonged to the Crown in 1086; but afterwards it passed into the hands of the Nunneries of Ambresbury and Nuneaton. It had been a ' holy place ' in Saxon days,* so its connection with these religious houses is a curious survival. What did not go to them went to a certain ' John Belet,' who built a moated house, which, beginning as Beletston, became Balsden; and this, after many vicissitudes, became vested in the hands of the Darrells of

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* See p. 81.

Littlecote, and then passed to Mr. Dixon, of Wallington. Few traces of this ancient house exist, which followed, though earlier, the fate of the Elizabethan mansion of Bucklebury, which John of Winchcombe, the son of the celebrated Newbury clothier, built there in 1540. Around the site of the latter, superstition still lingers. A chariot with six black horses, driven by headless postillions and a white lady (by way of contrast, one may suppose), haunts the site of the Winchcombes' house. Quaint country customs long survived at Bucklebury. On Mid-Lent Sunday young people returned to see their parents and feast with them, and so it got the name of ' Mothering' or ' Furmity ' Sunday. On St. Valentine's Day children still go from door to door singing rustic rhymes.*

Ufton Court, which was built by the Perkins in 1662, still remains intact. One of its two manors was the property of the Abbey at Reading, but they both passed to Francis Norreys, Earl of Berkshire, and from him to the Perkins who built the house, and finally to the hands of Mr. Benyon. The ancient gabled house is now divided into several dwellings, but it still contains many secret rooms and passages, which were doubtless places of refuge for both priests and laymen in troubled times. Such were not uncommon. Others exist in the Eystons' house at East Hendred, in that of the Throckmortons at Buckland and at Englefield, and there was one in the ancient house of the Besils at Besilsleigh before it was pulled down. In that at Ufton was found two petronels and a crucifix. Ufton is also noteworthy as having been the residence of Arabella Fermor, the Belinda of Pope's ' Rape of the Lock.'

Of all the county towns, Reading alone has slowly, but steadily and without check, increased in prosperity, and has probably, therefore, a more continuous if less eventful history than those which have from time to time taken precedence in Berkshire. In the Domesday Survey

* *Newbury News.*

it had but twenty-eight houses, and was the seat of the
Hundred Court ; and about this time the Nunnery of
Elfrida, if not burnt before by the Danes in 1006, must
have been destroyed, for William endowed his new-founded
Abbey of Battle with its possessions and church.

The town's history is, until its dissolution, that of the
Abbey. Near it in the fields below the bridge at Caver-
sham was fought the combat between Robert de Montford
and Henry de Essex (hereditary standard-bearers to the
Kings of England), in which the latter, who was charged
with cowardice in throwing away the Royal Standard in
the Welsh wars of 1157, was defeated : he became a monk
of Reading in 1163.

Chaucer, the poet, whether he lived at Donnington or
not, was mixed up with Berkshire men. When John of
Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, married Blanche Plantagenet
at Reading, there were feasts and jousts and great re-
joicings ; and Chaucer celebrated the occasion in his poem
called 'His Dream.' But it was not all pleasure for low
as well as high in those days any more than now, for the
same year a strong contingent of men with grievances
joined the insurrection of Wat Tyler. Nothing is known of
them or of what became of them ; but Reading, as well pos-
sibly as Newbury and certainly Wallingford, held disaffected
spirits then, as they did later in the Civil War, when the two
former places espoused the cause of the people. It is only
to be hoped they got out of the first tangle as skilfully as
Richard of Wallingford did. Still, if nothing was done
for the people at large, the nobles obtained for themselves
the institution of the new order 'Viscount' in 1389. The
Reading churches were ancient, and one at least, that of
St. Mary, benefited by the destruction of the Abbey, for
when rebuilt in 1550, it helped itself largely to the Abbey
materials. The taste for asceticism had not arisen then ;
as the churchwardens' accounts show that in 1557 the
sum of 3s. was paid 'to the Minstrels and Hobby Horse

upon Maye Daye,' and that 3s. 4d. was given 'to the morrys daunsers and the mynstrelles for mete and drinke at Whytsontide.'

St. Lawrence is considerably the older of the churches, and shows Norman work. It is the ancient municipal church of Reading, and very possibly was removed from an older site, and rebuilt when the Abbey was begun.

In it is a fine 'palimpsest,' in a brass to Walter Barton, which had been made from one to Sir John Popham, who had been buried in the cloisters of Charterhouse, London.* The records are full of interest. There is one of a payment 'to a *fre mason* that shuld have made the arch for the belis of the new organs for iiij dayes an di, by the day vj^d.—ij^s. iij^d.'

St. Lawrence shared in all the rejoicings when kings came and went, and rang its bells as impartially for Papist Mary as for Protestant Elizabeth, for English James as for Dutch William, for the Lord Protector as for Charles the King. It rang when these and others came, and on Essex's departure on one occasion the ringers were paid the sum of 3s., 'when the Jinerall was going a way.'

Laud, whose father was churchwarden here, left the sum of £50 from property in Bray to the vicar of the church.

St. Giles's, too, shows Norman work possibly, in the base of the tower; but the bulk of it belongs to the fourteenth century, and its Norman fragments may well have been plundered from some other building. Its only noteworthy piece of internal history is given in the plan of the church some years ago, when its arrangement of pews in the 'Churchwarden period' of architecture made it resemble 'the segment of an immense cobweb, of which a vast "three-decker" formed the centre. From this radiated with mathematical precision the pews on floor and gallery, the latter supported on cast-iron columns.'

ᵃ 'Hist. of St. Giles,' by the Rev. C. Kerry.

In its records, also, are many entries of interest relating to the social and political aspect of affairs. It shared fully in the ups and downs of creeds in the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth; for while, in 1558, the sum of 6d. was 'paid for brede and drincke for the ryngers when the altars were hallowed,' only two years after 2s. 8d. was expended 'for pulling doun the awlters and rydding away of the rubbis.'*

Laud, the Archbishop, who did as much as anyone, perhaps, to alienate Charles I. from his people—for his attempt to introduce a more ornate ritual, and the removal of the communion-table from the body of the church to the east end, had aroused the angry opposition of all the advanced Protestants—was born in Broad Street, in 1573. His father, a native of Wokingham, was a clothier of Reading, one of that guild of manufacturers as important here as in other parts of Berks.

The great Churchman was not unmindful of his native county. He left £120 a year to be employed for apprenticing ten boys born in Reading, and one each in Bray and Wokingham parishes; and every third year it was to be divided into £20 shares, which were to be given to maid-servants of the same places who had been three years in one service, so as to 'promote them in marriage.' A sum of £40 a year was also given to Wokingham to be divided every three years between 'three poor maidens of the age of 18,' under the same conditions; the money during the intermediate years to be expended in apprenticing poor boys. On Windsor, also, £50 was bestowed for a similar purpose.

Laud's rise was rapid. He was made Bishop of St. David's, of Bath and Wells, and then of London; and in 1633 Archbishop of Canterbury. He was an able scholar, energetic and in earnest; and seems, as Sir James White-

* 'Eccles. Hist. of Reading.'

lock, one of the judges, said, to have been 'too full of fire, though a just and good man ; and that his want of experience in State matters, and his too much zeal for the Church ceremonies, if he proceeded in the way he was then in, would set the nation on fire.'

That he was harsh and stern with those who differed from him is evident ; and to this the isolation and want of knowledge of men and of the world which his collegiate and ecclesiastical training had fostered may be mainly attributed. He, perhaps unintentionally, tried to resuscitate that spirit of priestly domination to which a large section of the community were absolutely antagonistic ; and to the Scotch especially, his opinions with regard to the Liturgy of the Church of England savoured strongly of Romish doctrines. There is no doubt that his views leant in that direction, though he probably never designed to return under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pontiff. Still, 'he had gone so far towards Rome that even the Papists had hopes of him, and' (as he says himself) 'actually offered him a Cardinal's Hat.' But he could not bend to the popular storm, and so broke before it. After three years' imprisonment in the Tower, he expiated on the scaffold his want of judgment.

Reading had produced clothiers almost as noteworthy as those of Newbury. There was a certain Thomas Cole, who had been known as the 'rich clothier of Reading;' and John Kendrick, a native of the town, but a clothier in London, was generous towards his county. He seems to have been a descendant of that William Kendrick whose monument is in St. Mary's Church, and who was said to have been descended from Saxon kings.* He left £4,000 to found a charity in Newbury, and £7,500 to further the maintenance of the cloth trade in Reading.

In the first case, the money was to be expended in the

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* 'Topog. Descrip. Berks.'

purchase of a 'house and garden for the employment of the poor in the clothing manufactory, and providing them with necessary materials.' But this was not carried out ; and, for a time at least, the produce of the legacy was lent by the Corporation in sums of £50 to weavers for three years.

The Reading bequest was used in part to build and endow the Jacobian Hall of the Dyers and Wool Merchants, which afterwards became a charity and residence for poor persons. It was named 'The Oracle,' and took its title, so it is said, from the 'Orchel' (Roccella tinctoria), a lichen brought from the Canary Isles, and used in dyeing.*

It is curious to notice what able and energetic families followed this trade. The Dolmans, Winchcombes, and Kendricks were all determined men of business, and left strong descendants. John Kendrick's daughter was one of these ; and, though rich, she could not find the man she chose to marry, until,

> ' Being at a noble wedding
> In the famous town of Reading,
> A young gentleman she saw,
> Who belongèd to the law ;'

and therefore determined that, lawfully or unlawfully, she would convert him into her lord.

So the gentleman in question, Benjamin Child, barrister-at-law, was challenged by a person unknown ; and, on going to Calcott Park, was met by a masked lady, who, with the courage of a determined woman, tells him he must

> ' " Either fight or marry me."
> Said he, " Madam, pray what mean ye ?
> In my life I ne'er have seen ye :
> Pray unmask, your visage show ;
> Then I'll tell you, ay or no." '

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* Murray, ' Handbook,' p. 33.

But the lady meant to have her own way as long as she could.

> ' " I will not my face uncover
> Till the marriage rites are over ;
> Therefore take you which you will—
> Wed me, sir, or try your skill." '

The barrister, unaccustomed to such determined pleading, resigned himself a captive to her courage, if not to her unknown charms. Married they were, and proceeded to Calcot House, where she leaves him for a while ; but, returning unmasked, tells him :

> ' " Sir, my servants have related,
> That some hours you have waited
> In my parlour ; tell me who
> In this house you ever knew ?'

And he, not unnaturally puzzled, explains that :

> ' " Madam, if I have offended,
> It is more than I intended.
> A young lady brought me here."
> " That is true," said she, " my dear." '

Thus the briefless barrister became lord of Calcott Hall and of its mistress. He was a man of peculiar tastes. Not that a fondness for oysters is necessarily peculiar, but the storage of oyster-barrels certainly is ; and this was so favourite a pursuit, that he had a room fitted with these empty relics of departed feasts. This was after the death of his wife, whom he very sincerely mourned—so much so, that he would hardly leave the house ; and his loss may, at least, have tended to his eccentricity.

The Kendrick vault in St. Mary's Church was opened in 1820, and the leaden coffin of Frances Child, ' moulded to the form of her body and features,' was discovered. She died in 1722 ; and Benjamin, her husband, joined her in 1767.

Reading has had many royal visitants. Queen Eliza-

beth stayed nine times in the town, and a royal seat was appointed for her in St. Lawrence Church. On one of these occasions she went one 'day to dinner to Mr. Comptroller's (Sir William Knollys) at Caversham. Mr. Green, Sheriff of Oxfordshire, met her at the bridge very well accompanied. Mr. Comptroller made great cheer, and entertained her with many devices of singing, dancing, and playing wenches, and such like. At her going thence she made three knights—Sir Francis Goodwin, Sir Edward Fettiplace, and Sir Richard Warder.'

The Abbey at Reading had been turned, at the Dissolution, into a royal palace, and here probably the Queen stayed during her visits to that town.

Charles I. spent much time here in 1625; but in 1642 the High Sheriff refused to obey his Majesty's commands, and the town was fortified.

When the King was there later in his year, many of the inhabitants, true to their convictions, left the town because the mayor and a few others then supported the Royalist cause.

In the siege of the following year, 1643, the tower of St. Giles was destroyed. The town passed again into the hands of the Roundheads, and 'April 30th, being Sunday, was spent in preaching and hearing God's Word, the churches being extraordinarily filled.' But Essex had to retreat, and the King's men entered it once more. His Majesty resided at Coley House.

'The distress of the inhabitants during all the confusion and horror of the war was so great, that they were reduced to the lowest depths of misery and distress.' The Royalists at one time pillaged the Roundheads; the latter, in their turn, looted the looters.

By 1647 Charles was a prisoner at Caversham. His children were allowed to stay with him there, after he had been permitted to meet them at the Greyhound Inn at Maidenhead. He was not at first kept in close confine-

ment, but was permitted to go to the inn at Goring to play
bowls on its bowling-green. His fondness for the game
here was noted in the following lines :

> 'Stop, traveller, stop ! In yonder peaceful glade
> His favourite game the royal martyr play'd ;
> Here, stripp'd of honours, children, freedom, rank,
> Drank from the bowl, and bowl'd for what he drank ;
> Sought in a cheerful glass his cares to drown,
> And chang'd his guinea ere he lost his crown.'

There were superstitious people in Berkshire at that
time. Some of the soldiers of Lord Essex had espied a
witch crossing the Kennet, near Newbury, on a thin plank,
and had much trouble in despatching her ; for the 'bullett
back rebound'd like a ball, and narrowly it missed his face
that was the shooter.'*

Not long after there was at the Church of Bradfield a
certain rector called John Pordage, who was accused by
the Reverend Christian Fowler, of Reading, before the
Commissioners of Berks, for blasphemy, anti-scriptural
doctrine, and familiarity with evil spirits ; and for these
crimes he was ejected in 1654. He seems to have been a
harmless enough mystic ; he was a Behmenist, says Baxter,
and fancied himself inspired. He had communion with
spirits ; he said that 'an impression was made in the brick
wall of his chimney, of a coach drawn with tigers and lions,
which could not be got out till it was hewn out with pick-
axes.' His proselyte, Everard, was equally skilled in
raising the spirits. They were, like many other Berkshire
people, men before their time. Now they would have
been professional 'mediums,' and subscribed to 'Day-
break' or 'Light.'

With the Revolution of 1688 the town had little to do ;
though, as has been already pointed out, it saw one of the
very few skirmishes of that period. This event was note-
worthy in Reading annals. It was long kept up by the

* Trans. N.D.F.C., vol. ii.

ringing of bells, and a ballad called, ' The Reading Skirmish '
told how

> ' Five hundred Papists came there
>   To make a final end
>   Of all the town in time of prayer,
>   But God did them defend.'

The woollen manufacture that existed here had been
shaken by the Dissolution of the monasteries, and was
destroyed by the Civil War. That trade, together with
the making of cloth, pins, coarse linen, gauzes, silks, and
ribbons, has disappeared ; in its place has arisen the iron
and tin works, the breweries, seed establishments, and
biscuit factory, that now render Reading the chief com-
mercial town of Berks.

It was not until 1785 that the town was paved ; but
though backward in town improvements to this extent, it
formed a volunteer corps as far back as 1794 ; and this was
largely increased in 1798, when Dr. Valpy, of Reading
School, was its chaplain. The new Town Hall, Assize
Court, Grammar School, and restored church of St. Lawrence,
are worthy additions in late years to the rising town. It
gave its name to Sir Jacob Astley, who was made Baron of
Reading for his services in the Civil War ; but the title be-
came extinct with his grandson, and has never been revived,
though there was a ' Lord Cadogan ' of Reading in 1716.

Thus Reading has followed the usual law. It has really
the oldest history of any town in Berkshire. Its museum
contains the tools of local Palæolithic man, first found and
arranged there by Dr. J. Stevens ; polished celts and flints,
together with implements of bone, show its next occupa-
tion in Neolithic days ; and finally, bronze weapons indicate
its advance in the arts of prehistoric time.* Roman, Saxon,
and Dane followed. Mediæval monk and Norman castle-
builder both recognised its value. And now as the junction
of five great roads, two canalized streams, and five great

* Dr. J. Stevens in Trans. Berks. Archæol. Soc.

railways, it has gathered to itself, as Wallingford and Abingdon did long years before, the streams of traffic from the West towards the capital. In the age of the sword it was a strategic centre, and now in the age of commerce it still maintains its position in the peaceful strategy of trade.

CHAPTER IX.

ITS MODERN LIFE.

THE county, according to the Domesday Survey, contained twenty-two Hundreds, of which twenty still exist; and among the ancient manors, those of Arborfield, Ashampstead, Didcot, East Garston, Hurst, Radley, Ruscombe, Sandhurst, Sandleford, Sunning Hill, Tidmarsh, Tilehurst, Woodhay, and Wokingham, are not mentioned.* So it may be surmised that some of these were created when the forest area was cleared, and the lands drained and reclaimed.

There are traces of the survival of old things in the fact that up to the last century a pollard-oak in the parish of Shefford was the place where the Hundred Court used to be held, under the name of the 'Hug Ditch Court,' said to be derived from Hugo, King of Mercia.

Serving as a link between these ancient days and our own was a curious relic which stood near Basildon. It was a stone cell, with a semicircular top, which was formerly leaded, and with a door, bearing the inscription, 'Nobes' tomb, 1692.' Of its origin nothing is known; but it was not ancient. Tradition says it was erected by a farmer, who lived near, to be his last resting-place; and that he ordered that, when he had been interred, the door should be locked, and the key thrown inside through an aperture left for the purpose. When he lived people said, so the

* 'Encyclop. Brit.'

story goes, 'There goes Nobes on his white horse;' but nothing is known of him, and the cell door is broken open.

As a trading county, the commerce of Berkshire has drifted from its borders to its central district.

With the downfall of monasticism, the cloth trade, which had been instrumental in establishing many of the Berkshire towns, gradually declined.*

The great sheep-fair on the Ilsley Downs, which may have indirectly led to the extensive establishment of woollen manufactories, was founded in the reign of Henry III., and is still held on the Wednesday in Easter week:

> 'Ilsley, remote amidst the Berkshire downs,
> Claims these distinctions o'er her sister towns,
> Far famed for sheep and wool, though not for spinners,
> For sportsmen, doctors, publicans, and sinners.'

There were other centres of cloth manufacture besides Newbury and Reading.

Hendred Church contains numerous monuments, with brasses to persons having such titles as *Pannarius* and *Lanarius*—that is, to 'merchants in cloth and wool;' and in the fields near, the cloth was dried which was sold at Cuckamsley fair. The cloth could be made and fully completed ready for use; and a striking example of this occurs at Buckland, where is preserved a coat, the wonder of 1811. For 'in one day 2 sheep of Sir John Throckmorton were shorn, the wool spun, spooled, warped, loomed, and woven; the cloth burred, milled, dyed, dried, sheared, and pressed, after which the coat was made up by White, a Newbury tailor, and worn by Sir John in presence of 5,000 spectators within 13 hrs. 20 min. from the time the sheep-shearing commenced.'

In the last century there were old frames in 'Rack Marsh,' not far from Newbury, where, up to 1709, druggets and serges were manufactured. Wokingham was also a seat of the cloth trade; and at Shefford and Shaw linen was made. Bagnor and Donnington had paper-

* Kellie's 'Directory.'

mills.   Chalk is still made into whiting at Kintbury, and flint is ground there for porcelain and glass.

The area of the county is 758 square miles, or 485,120 acres.*   It grows much corn on the slopes of the valleys; water meadows line the flat basin of the Kennet; and the open chalk downs along the Ridgeway afford pasture for sheep. One variety of the sheep, the ' Not,' is said to be native.

Its canal system was, at one time, largely used.   The ' Thames Navigation ' extends as far as St. John's Bridge, Lechlade, where the river is 258 feet above sea-level.   The ' Kennet Navigation ' begins at Reading, with an altitude of 134 feet, and terminates at Newbury, where it is 264 feet. The 'Wilts and Berks' Canal, uniting Abingdon (180 feet) with Wantage (345 feet); and the 'Kennet and Avon' Canal, which proceeds west from Newbury, completes its system of water-carriage.

Its railway system, which is even more extensive, met with as much, or even more, opposition than did the introduction of the stage-coach into Berkshire.†   This time the objection began with the representatives of Eton College, who, doubtless from conscientious motives hard now to understand, were desirous of keeping as far away at least as Slough the contamination of the iron horse. But they were at length compelled to give a reluctant assent, and thus the South-Western and Great Western Companies both brought their stations into Windsor town.   Now, therefore, there is a fair network of railways.   Reading forms the greatest junction, and therefore grows most rapidly; and when a portion of the Northern trade from Didcot, by Newbury, to the South is diverted along the new line which is being constructed, the renewal of the traffic that made the latter town once great will, it is to be hoped, have a corresponding result.

There are still six municipal boroughs—namely, those of Reading, Windsor, Maidenhead, Newbury, Abingdon, and Wallingford, of which the first two return Members to the House of Commons.   The county itself from 1296 until

* Arrowsmith.   † See p. 232.

1832 returned but two Members, and the effect of the Parliamentary reform of 1832 was to increase that number to three; while the Act of 1885 retained the same number of county representatives as before, but divided the county into three districts named respectively after Newbury, Abingdon and Wokingham.

Six peerages take their titles from the county. The Howards are Earls of Berkshire as well as of Suffolk; the Cravens' second title is that of Uffington; the dormant Earldom of Banbury included the Viscounty of Wallingford; the Marquis of Bute is Earl of Windsor; and the Berties are Earls of Abingdon. Wokingham gave the title of Baron to the Prince of Denmark, husband of Queen Anne; and Reading that of Baron Astley in 1648, and Lord Cadogan of Reading in 1716.

Some of its waters were medicinal. At Sunning Hill are chalybeate springs, which were once much resorted to from Windsor; and at Goring also, as appears by the *Reading Mercury* of 13th June, 1724, which contains a list of those cured, was a spring noted for healing skin diseases. In Clewer parish is a mineral spring, which Ashmole refers to as Elias's Spital, now St. Peter's Well, which probably had a chantry attached. There were other 'spring wells' at St. Leonard's Hill (where there was a 'pump-room') and Winkfield Park; but fashion has deserted many of these English Spas for foreign ones of probably no greater value.

The population of the county has shown a rapid increase within the last fifty years, as will be seen by a comparison between the census of 1831 and that of 1881.* The total

	1831.	1871.	1881.
º Reading - - -	15,595	32,324	42,054
Abingdon - - -	5,259	5,799	5,684
Windsor - - -	5,650	11,769	12,273
Newbury - - -	5,959	6,602	10,144
Farringdon - -	3,033	3,525	3,141
Wantage - - -	3,282	3,295	3,488
Wallingford - -	—	2,972	2,803

population in 1831 was 146,234, but in 1881 it had increased to 218,382.

The older families have disappeared with great rapidity. Of the 195 names mentioned in Ashmole's 'Visitation' of the county, in 1664, there are but few that still occupy their old ancestral houses. These are the Puseys of Pusey, whose tenure is traditionally stated to date from the days of Cnut; and the Eystons of Hendred, who hold the Manor of Arches, which Henry de Ferrers was seized of in Domesday. But the Englefield family, which could show a holding of eighteen generations when the 'Visitation' was made in 1623, became extinct in 1822. The Cravens of Beenham and of Ashdown, who now may be reckoned the second oldest family in Berks, have held their manors and possessions since the early part of the seventeenth century.

The Berkshire dialect has many curious provincialisms, some of true Saxon derivation. Thus the Berkshire man says *thik* for that, *him* for he, *rot* for rat, *not* for gnat, *postis* for posts, and *thof* for though. Nearly is *anenst;* houses, *housen;* peas, *peasen;* care for, *hoe for;* brittle, *frow;* sprightly, *sprack;* rags, *littocks;* clumsy, *bungersome;* angry, *scrow;* wretched, *unked;* hungry, *leer;* troublesome, *prodigal;* and garden, *ghern.* To prefer is *to mouch;* to garner, *to garn;* and to bind, *to grip.* A man is *queasy* if he be sick, and *deedy* if he be notable. This latter term is expressive. *Oo'lt* is 'wilt thou'; *overrights* is opposite; to entice is *to tole awoye;* to labour is *to scawt;* to muddle is *to caddle;* in great spirits is to be *in great spout;* and the scolded child complains of his corrector that *he do chapse oi.* He *torments* when he terrifies, and *terrifies* when he wishes to torment.

Mr. Thomas Hughes, formerly of Donnington, near Newbury, has best illustrated the county talk in his 'Scouring of the White Horse.' In Cupid's garden a

Berkshire man meets two Berkshire lasses, and tells his story thus :

> ' As I wur in Cubit's gardin,
>   Not mwoar nor haf an hour,
> 'Twur ther I zeed two may-dens
>   Zittin' under Cubit's bower,
> A-gatherin' of sweet jassa-mine,
>   The lilly and the rose,—
> These be the fairest flowers
>   As in the gardin grows.
>
> ' I vondly stepped to one o' them,
>   These words to her I zays :
> " Be you engaged to arra young man,
>   Come, tell to me, I prays."
> " I bean't engaged to narra young man,
>   I solemnly declare ;
> I aims to live a may-den,
>   And still the laurel wear."
>
> ' Zays I, " My stars and garters !
>   This here's a pretty go,
> Vor a vine young mayd as never wos
>   To sar' all mankind zo."
> But the t'other young may-den looked shy at me.
>   And vrom her seat she ris'n,
> Zays she, " Let thee and I go our own waay,
>   And we'll let she go shis'n." '

But he believes in Berkshire and in his own home :

> ' Throo aall the waarld owld Garge would bwoast,
> Commend me to merry owld England mwoast ;
> While vools gwoes praating vur and nigh,
> We stwops at whum my dog and oi.'

There are many quaint traditions and customs still existing in this as in every other English county, but they are rapidly disappearing before modern materialism and modern education. None the less they form part of our national history.

In the manors of east and west Enborne once obtained a peculiar custom in land-tenure. 'On the death of a copy-

hold tenant, the widow is to have her free bench in all his copyhold lands *dum sola et casta fuerit ;* but if she committed incontinency she forfeited her widow's estate ; nor could it be restored unless she mounted a black ram, and came into the next court held for the manor, riding backwards, and repeating a quaint formula of words.'*

The feudal holding of Pusey has been already referred to ; and there is another typical case in that of the Manor of East Garston, which was ' held by the service of finding a knight clad in plate armour to serve in the King's army for forty days, at the lord's cost, whenever he should be in the territory of Kedwelly, in Wales, of which manor this was a member.'†

With charities and almshouses the county abounds ; and one particular form of helpfulness is of Reading origin. For formerly ' On Good Friday, in every year, three maidservants, who have lived in one service five years, are appointed by the Corporation, who throw lots in the Council Chamber for twenty nobles, the gift of Mr. John Blagrave, June 10, 1611. At the nomination of the mayor elect, on the last Monday in August, in every year, three other maidservants, appointed as last mentioned, also throw lots in the Council Chamber for eight pounds, the gift of the late Aldermen Mr. John Deane and Mr. John Richards ; and the sum of five pounds has of late years been given by Martin Annesley, Esq., brother to the member. And the late Awberry Flory, Esq., also gave by will the interest of £100 for ever, to be added to Mr. Annesley's gift, and equally divided between the two *unfortunate* maids.'‡

Some customs relating to the church were curious, as, for example, that of parishioners of Cumnor, who, if paying ' vicarial tithes, have a custom of repairing immediately after prayers on Christmas Day to the vicarage-

* 'Topog. Descrip. Berks.'   † *Ibid.*
‡ *Ibid.*

house, claiming to be there entertained with four bushels of malt brewed into ale, two bushels of wheat made into bread, and half a hundredweight of cheese ; what may be left is the next morning, after divine service, given to the poor.'

A custom, or rather superstition, common to other counties beside Berks is related in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1794. The writer mentions 'a notion that a ring made from a piece of silver collected at the communion is a cure for convulsions and fits of every kind. A woman in my parish applied to me for a shilling on Easter Sunday, in the hope of deriving benefit from the effect of a ring to be made from it by a blacksmith in or near the town. As I was convinced she was not influenced by any mercenary motive, but had really confidence in the remedy, I took care not to deprive her of such benefit, at least, as she might derive from her imagination. I have not yet heard of the success of the donation, but have since understood that the superstition prevails very generally in the neighbourhood. The notion would seem to originate from Popish ideas of the Eucharist.'

In Aubrey's ' Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme,' he says in reference to sacred wells, that ' in processions they (the priests) used to read a Ghospel at the springs to bless them ; which hath been discontinued at Sunnywell, in Barkshire, but since 1688.'

Pilgrimages were made to the old chapel at Sonning— which had been, as already pointed out, the seat of a Saxon Bishoprick—for the ' cure of madness.' At Finchampstead on one occasion, so Dr. Childrey tells us, a well boiled up with streams of blood, and continued so to do for many days.

There were beliefs and customs, too, of a less religious character. In Abingdon, as late as 1782, a writer says that ' Early in one of the first Sundays in October I found the people in the street at the entrance of the town very

busy in adorning the outside of their houses with boughs of trees and garlands of flowers, and the paths were strewed with rushes. One house was distinguished by a greater number of garlands than the rest, and some were making to be fixed at the end of the poles. On inquiring the reason, I was told that it was usual to have this ceremony performed in the street in which the new mayor lived, on the first Sunday that he went to church after his election.' This was evidently a survival of the pageant that accompanied the acceptation of the office of Chief Magistrate of the Borough, and strewing fresh rushes in rooms or elsewhere was a common custom before the introduction of carpets.*

The Lamborne, long believed to be persistently intermittent, was stated to 'go off about Michaelmas, and sometimes sooner ; but the sooner it goes the cheaper corn is usually that year, if the observation of the country people be to be listened to.' There seems, however, to be no foundation either for the statement or its deduction. Astrology had been by no means relegated to its present obscurity even as late as the reigns of the early Georges in Berkshire. The plague almost 'dispeopled' Wallingford in 1348, and ' Mr. Camden attributes this to the conjunction of Saturn and Mars in the 25th Degree of Capricorn, which happened in February, 1342. Dr. Childrey thinks this cause to come a little too early for such an effect, and therefore pitches upon the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter in the 18th Degree of Libra in the year 1345. But we think it unsafe to fix such great effects upon any one single aspect, without considering the face of the rest of Heaven and other concurrent causes. This is the way pursued by some late knowing astrologers, and particularly with success by the learned Dr. Good.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine Library*, Archæology, Part I., there is a reference to the discovery of a cavern in the chalk

* Brand's ' Pop., Antiq.,' vol. ii.

at Yattendon during the year 1819, but nothing is known of its position now. It seems to have been, like the 'Dane-pits' near Tilbury, or the 'Grimes' Graves' in the Eastern Counties, a mine for the excavation of chalk flints during the Neolithic age, rather than merely a habitation ; though doubtless such subterraneous works were utilized for dwellings as well as for mines.

The county has increased its educational establishments by the addition, to its ancient schools, of those of St. Andrew at Bradfield, of Wellington at Crowthorne, and the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. The first named was opened in 1850 for general education ; that at Crowthorne, built in 1856, ' for the education of orphan sons of officers,' but not only for them ; and that at Sandhurst for cadets in the army, who were first received in a school at High Wycombe in 1799, then transferred in 1802 to Marlow, and finally removed to the present building in 1812. For many years the cadets, whose course of instruction was partly civil, partly professional, were admitted at as early an age as fourteen, and spent four years at the institution ; but in 1869 this system, which was not in accordance with modern conditions, was abolished ; and 'students,' who were gazetted to regiments as vacancies occurred during their residence at the College, were admitted by open competition at the mimimum age of seventeen years. This, again, was modified by the introduction of officers, as sub-lieutenants, who had spent one year with their regiments, and were therefore better qualified for military instruction ; but this system also was set aside, and was replaced by a modified cadet system. In this the gentlemen cadets enter through open competition between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two, and remain one year under instruction in purely professional subjects, when they are gazetted to regiments as vacancies occur. At Beaumont Lodge, near Old Windsor, is a Roman Catholic educational college under Jesuit guidance.

The great world of letters has not been unrepresented in

Berkshire, and it has been the favourite home, as its scenes
have been the favourite theme, of writers and poets.
Chaucer certainly was connected with it, and very possibly
at times resided in it.   Pope's early home was at Binfield,
a place of which he speaks tenderly, as

> ' My paternal cell,
> A little house with trees a-row,
> And, like its master, very low.'

His poems of ' Windsor Forest ' and of ' Farringdon Hill '
display, if not high merit, at least keen appreciation of the
beauties of Berks.   Miss Mitford, who resided at Three
Mile Cross, lies not far from her old home in the church at
Swallowfield.

Drayton, Spenser, and numerous others have expatiated
on the beauties of the Thames valley.   Sir John Denham
in ' Cooper's Hill,' and Robert Morris in ' St. Leonard's
Hill,' both chose for a poetical immortality some of the
loveliest bits of gentle English country life; and as far
back as 1635, Otway wrote his poem on ' Windsor Castle.'
A poet laureate, Henry T. Pye, was Member for the county
at the end of the last century, and wrote the poem of
' Farringdon Hill ;' and Fenton died at East Hampstead.
Lastly, ' Charming Mary Montagu ' gathered round her
at Sandleford some of the most brilliant intellects of her
time ; and at Upton Court dwelt Arabella Fermor.

The history of each of these is one of more or less
success and happiness ; but in the quiet churchyard of Old
Windsor lies one other ' artist,' whose career at least now
all may pity.   Poor ' Perdita '—a victim to the ' Prince
Regent '—has found peace there at last !

The history of Berkshire is an epitome of the history
of England. Through Brit-Belgic interference in Continental
matters, Cæsar was led to invade this country ; and Com-
mius, chief of the Attrebatian tribes, had much to do with the
invasion.   The greatest Romano-British city south of the
Thames, Silchester, stands on the southern boundary of the

county with its amphitheatre actually in it. The most important of the Saxon states, that of Wessex, held Berkshire as its centre ; and Alfred, the King who decisively checked the Danes, fought his greatest battle on the Berkshire hills. William the Norman found a loyal friend in Wigod, the Saxon thane of Wallingford ; and D'Oyley's castle there was one of the first and strongest Norman fortresses in Britain. The Civil Wars of the second Stuart traversed this county more frequently and continuously than almost any other. It saw two of its greatest battles fought, and it contained the last fortress in England that held out for the King. One of Charles's strongest adherents, who was most concerned in bringing the differences between Sovereign and people to the arbitrament of the sword, was Laud, a Reading man; William Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, and one of the prelates committed to the Tower by James II., was born at Tilehurst ; and the only bloodshed that marred the almost peaceful revolution against the last named Sovereign was fought on Berkshire soil.

Lastly, it has been a ' royal county ' since the Saxon era. Alfred was born in Berkshire, and there were royal palaces also at Farringdon and Old Windsor. But to New Windsor was transferred the Castle and Palace which is the noblest in England ; and which, therefore, became the 'royal borough' of Berkshire. In its present condition, as the peaceful residence of the Queen of a peaceful people, may be at length recognised the fulfilment of Lord Falkland's prayer before he fell in battle on a Berkshire field, that ' Peace might overshadow the land.'

ABRIDGED LIST OF BOOKS, ETC., RELATING TO BERKSHIRE.

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